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THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT
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FRANCE AND THE FRENCH

Michelet à la mode

René Clair's Paris, by Richard Cobb

The last of Malraux

Constant and Mme Récamier

Humour: Alphonse Allais, Bécassine, Bretécher

SIR SIDNEY SMITH

Sir Sidney Smith, hero of the siege of Acre, 1799—a "straight" ceremonial portrait by James Gillray of a mercurial and arrogant man which shows Gillray's "singular incapacity for flattery", as Draper Hill points out in his commentary to The Satirical Etchings of James Gillray (142pp., Dover/Constable, Paperback, £3.60). The book reproduces more than a hundred of the etchings of the incomparable caricaturist, a highly-strung introvert who, Mr Draper writes, "cultivated the image of a detached, cynical 'hired gun', concealing any actual political convictions beneath a veil of ambivalence and irony". See also page 544.

One man's French Revolution

The poetry of Anthony Hecht

Writing Southern-style

Do we need a Constitution?

The romance of Erica Jong

Technology and the composer by Pierre Boulez

The politics of music by George Steiner

Michelet à la mode

By Douglas Johnson

JULES MICHELET :
Oeuvres complètes
Volume 1, 1798-1827. 637pp. 131fr
Volume 2, 1828-1831. 709pp. 143fr
Volume 3, 1832-1839. 950pp. 185fr
Volume 4, Histoire de France I 869pp. 185fr
Volume 5, Histoire de France II 729pp. 185fr
Paris : Flammarion.

Journal
Volume 3, 1861-1867. 739pp. 125fr
Volume 4, 1868-1874. 642pp. 115fr
Edited by Claude Digeon
Paris: Gallimard.

LINDA ORR :
Jules Michelet: Nature, History and Language
213pp. Cornell University Press. £10.

Few centenaries have proved as fruitful as that of Michelet in 1974. The publishing house of Flammarion, which was responsible for the original, and highly defective, *Oeuvres complètes* that appeared in forty volumes between 1898 and 1903, launched a new edition of his complete works, in twenty volumes. Under the general editorship of Paul Viallaneix (the second edition of whose *Sorbonne thesis* on Michelet, *La Voie royale*, has recently appeared), this will bring together articles and other works which have never been published before, as well as presenting all the textual variations. With the exception of the *Histoire de France* and the *Histoire de la Révolution*, which will appear consecutively, the chronological order of original publication is being followed.

It is clear that the existence of such a critical edition will place Michelet in a privileged position among nineteenth-century French historians; in contrast to such figures as Barante, Guizot, Taine, Fustel de Coulanges and others. One is obliged to see this project as part of a considerable reappraisal of Michelet's reputation and this impression is confirmed by the various discussions which have been taking place on Michelet as part of the centenary celebrations. One notes in particular the colloquium held at the Collège de France (the proceedings were published in the *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France*) and another held in the château of Vascœuil, a centre for Michelet studies in the Eure department (whose proceedings were published in *Romantisme*).

For the first time Michelet's entire oeuvre is being scrutinized, and his books on natural history, *L'Oiseau, L'Insecte, La Mer* and *La Montagne*, which he wrote while completing his *Histoire de France*, are no longer dismissed as biological nonsense, something to be deliberately ignored. The publication of the final two volumes of his *Journal*, covering the last thirteen years of his life, show that his much-discussed old age is not to be rejected as an embarrassing mixture of voyeurism, eroticism and scatological obsession. We now follow Michelet himself in trying to perceive the essential coherence of his vast and varied production. We [illegible] colloquium was [illegible] (all very well in paperback) and several programmes on French radio and television have confirmed that he is an author very much *à la mode*.

It would be relatively simple to trace the stages of this reappraisal, through Lucien Febvre, Roland Barthes, the Michelet exhibition at the Archives Nationales in 1961, Paul Viallaneix, and the contemporary interest in witchcraft which caused *La Sorcière* to be recognized for the remarkable work it is. But the criticisms of Michelet have always been much slighter and it was at first apparent. His critics are easily embarrassed, and there is unease about him which is no different in style and method from his contemporaries that he inherited in them a generalized [illegible] ideas. André Chénier has pointed out that just as "Victor Hugo, hélas !" is the accepted response to the question of who is the greatest of French poets, so "Michelet, hélas !" might well be the response to that of who was the greatest of French historians.

But once one can stand sufficiently apart from him to avoid embarrassment, then much of the hostility is removed. There is his style, for example. In the 1830s Victor Cousin found it "trop lyrique" and Michelet's friend Poret regretted that his expression was "*pas* assez calme". More recently Barry Rose has commented that *Michelet requires seven question*-marks and fourteen exclamation-marks to describe Marat as looking like a frog, and another critic has referred to his style as being, at times, "almost hysterical". But once one accepts this exuberance and passion, and since we are now more aware of the imperfections of "l'histoire glacée", and know that Michelet was throughout his life conscious of the problems of language and expression, then what was a subject for reprobation becomes rather an additional focus of interest. There was the suggestion also that Michelet was too imaginative a historian, careless of his sources, multiplied in his prejudices. His own boast, "moi, avec un texte, je fais mieux que d'autres avec cinquante" has been held up against him, and Gustave Rudler's assessment of the famous section on Joan of Arc in the *Histoire de France*, where he praises the legend, *the epic and the work of philosophy* and art, but rejects the history, is typical of many other criticisms.

It is precisely Michelet's imagination, however, which is now praised. "Je veux faire parler les silences de l'histoire" is an ambition which is today shared by a whole school of historians, and it is therefore natural that his preoccupation with the ordinary people, with "mentalités", women, children, death, sex, clothes, with what Jacques Le Goff has called "une certaine histoire de la nature dans une histoire globale", should cause him to be hailed as a precursor and a pioneer. Thus, while respecting the influence of those whose studies of Michelet have contributed to a greater understanding of his qualities, it is the change in our own attitudes and assumptions which is most notable in this process of revision. It is perhaps an irony of history (of which Michelet himself would have approved) that just as he sought to grasp the essence of a past age, so now Michelet would seem to present us with a vital key to understanding the psychology of the nineteenth-century man of letters.

It would seem, too, that at least two of the commoner approaches to Michelet are now specially inadequate. One approach treats him simply as a Romantic historian, whose strengths and weaknesses are to be associated with Romanticism in general, as a movement of literature and ideas. There is certainly much of what one commonly understands as "Romantic" in Michelet: his self-dramatization, his evocation of great, apocalyptic moments, his interrogation of the past, his enthusiasm for the people ("je plongeai dans le peuple", he wrote in his 1869 preface to the *Histoire de France*) and his desire *to speak the language of the* people. His emotion when he discovered a letter from Pétion, written to his wife just before his execution, was such that he could neither continue to read it nor copy it, and this personal involvement, this necessity of assimilating his subject to himself before he could start to write about it, is again Romantic, as is the whole notion of "l'histoire résurrectionniste".

But there is ample evidence to show that Michelet deliberately and consciously rejected the Romantic school of historians, and on many occasions emphasized that he belonged neither to the "école pittoresque" nor to "les narrateurs", that he was influenced by none of his contemporaries and stood alone ("A quoi ramènes-tu ? Es-tu un Walter Scott pour conter longuement le détail pittoresque, les grasses tables de Philippe le Bon, le vain voeu du Faisan?"). In a hitherto unpublished manuscript which appeared in a special number of the Aix-en-Provence review *L'Arc* (part of which seems to have been written in 1854, *although a second part probably* dates from 1868-69), Michelet sees himself as having been subjected to two great influences, "deux torrents" as he calls them, "le flot *romantique*" and "le *mouvement* des écoles utopistes". But while he observed them both, he claims that he was quite separate : "J'étais mon monde à moi".

The second outmoded approach to Michelet is that which seeks to interpret his historical focus in terms of his immediate political experience. It is of course undeniable *that certain events* affected him intellectually as well as emotionally: they were "l'éclair de juillet", the campaign against the Jesuits in the 1840s, the repression of June 1848 and his refusal to accept Napoleon III. All these were important occasions, and their effect upon him fills out the telling phrase which he uses in his 1839 lectures : "L'histoire ne servira à rien si on n'y met les préoccupations du présent." But it would be wrong to suppose that because Michelet was alarmed by the revival of religion or by the educational policies of the Soult-Guizot government, or because he was filled with a profound pessimism by the spectacle of the Second Empire, he therefore changed his attitude towards the Middle Ages. This would seriously underestimate the whole nature of his intellectual development.

It was his passionate determination to write a history such as *no one else* had written before him, together with his alert curiosity, that determined his progress. The fact that at the Ecole Normale Supérieure he had to teach both history and philosophy, while at the Collège de France he was appointed to the "chaire de morale et d'histoire", encouraged him to read widely, to learn foreign languages, to discover distant civilizations, to study *law, science* and natural history. "J'étais ouvert à toute chose" he later recalled, and he was to claim that the acquisition of such learning gradually *transformed the quality of his* work. He insisted particularly on the difference between the second and third volumes of the *Histoire de France*: "J'avais été artiste et écrivain. Je fis historien." *It was* not because of his indignation at the sight of a military band leading a procession in honour of the Virgin that he wrote *La Bible de l'humanité*.

Certain of the major themes in this work had been announced more than thirty years earlier, in *L'Introduction à l'histoire universelle*, while *others were developed in his* 1848 lectures, or emerged through his friendship with Hippolyte Fauche or in reaction to Renan's *La Vie de Jésus*. That the resentments of the present could find their way into the descriptions of the past should not obscure the extraordinary nature of an intellectual ambition which sought to grasp "le double mouvement de l'homme, progrès de l'individualité, progrès de fraternité", and set out to organize a reconstruction of religions as well as a schematic arrangement of different beliefs. It *is interesting to learn from the last* volume of the *Journal* that he sometimes re-read *La Bible de l'Humanité*, usually finding that it contained many rich suggestions *and discoveries that the public had* failed to notice.

In presenting Michelet's translations from Vico, together with his commentary on Vico's life and the *significance of his work, Paul Viallaneix* reminds us that Michelet had come across Vico as early as 1819, when elaborating a project for studying the ways in which the *character of different peoples is* revealed by their vocabularies. Michelet himself violently rejected Victor Cousin's claim that it was he who had first introduced him to Vico ("dans le brillant artiste, l'excellent écrivain, le merveilleux parleur, éclatant trop le grand mime italien", he wrote of Cousin), and it would be wrong to think that there was anything accidental in his discovery. Buchon's translation of Dugald Stewart and Salfi's essay on Filangieri both mention Vico in the early 1820s, and Michelet's interest in him coincided with that of Ballanche and Jouffroy, as, to his great alarm, it coincided with other projects for translating him.

So far as Michelet was concerned, Vico was the great influence on his intellectual life; indeed he sometimes writes as if Vico were the only influence on him : "Je suis né de Vico", he wrote, as this new edition reminds *us, only two years before his death.* But it is curious that, although ever since Lanson and Monod first wrote about Michelet, it has become a commonplace to emphasize *the importance of Vico*, few have tried to analyse the nature or extent of his influence. It is a pity that in this new edition the opportunity was not taken to exam[illegible] some of the more critical *aspects of Michelet's interpreta*tions of Vico which have been made, such writers as Adolfo Omodeo, Guido Fasso and Alain Pons. It is true that M Viallaneix gives us a *chance to compare* Michelet's [illegible] with the more accurate Fre[illegible] translation made by Doubl[illegible] 1953 (he could also have compa[illegible] them with the *more complete* [illegible] literal translation published by [illegible] Princess Belgiojoso in 1844).

But the suggestion has been m[illegible] that Michelet subsequently *mu*tated to "mon Vico" a numbe[illegible] ideas which he did not in fact [illegible] to him, and it is more than li[illegible] that he did not fully grasp, share, Vico's more dialectical, *rigorous view of "the people"* a[illegible] more than he understood his [illegible] one of the founders of *Historic*[illegible] It is only fair to Michelet to [illegible] that, unlike many Vico commen[illegible] tors, he did not get *stuck in* [illegible] cul-de-sac of *corsi e ricorsi*, [illegible] saw the importance of the [illegible] *methods of our times* of 1708, [illegible] its emphasis on the problem [illegible] knowledge. But he probably [illegible] in Vico what he wanted to find.

Nevertheless, the spectacle [illegible] Michelet slowly reflecting on [illegible] significance of a neglected Ital[illegible] philosopher, at the same time [illegible] was working out the implicat[illegible] of his reading of Grimm, [illegible] discovery of German history [illegible] Charles de Villers) and of Lei[illegible] is one pleasing to modern eyes. [illegible] self-confidence was boundless, [illegible] was his erudition. But he [illegible] never sure about his method, he [illegible] never satisfied, he was always [illegible] conscious, experimenting [illegible] He deliberately set himself [illegible] from those who established a [illegible] rative, an analysis, a theory, [illegible] as Thiers, or Guizot, or Thi[illegible] Although unfashionably enthu[illegible] tic, *he represents the historian* [illegible] is always asking himself what he [illegible] doing, who, consciously or [illegible] tively, ponders the nature of [illegible] historical fact, and is aware of [illegible] *privileged position of the narra*tor of history.

This means that once one has [illegible] beyond the stage of expressing [illegible] approval of his style, of his [illegible] *al, disregarding certain items* [illegible] evidence, or of his plagiarisms, [illegible] kind of history is more of a [illegible] longe than most other kinds. It [illegible] certain that for Michelet the [illegible] *torian is necessarily a creator*, [illegible] not a mere registrar. His histo[illegible] discourse is a text which has to [illegible] examined in its own right as [illegible] as being one which can be con[illegible] led by reference to sources. The[illegible] a particularly rewarding operat[illegible] when applied to Michelet, when [illegible] is studied neither as historian [illegible] as poet, but as both. This is [illegible] Barthes can claim that Michelet [illegible] dicated, or at least "a prospect [illegible] a general science of Man.

In his article published in 19[illegible] (which is much less ambi[illegible] than *his contribution to the* [illegible] lège de France symposium) [illegible] Barthes rejects the idea that [illegible] text such as *L'Histoire du dix-[illegible] vième siècle* it is the presentat[illegible] *of the facts* which is impo[illegible] On the contrary, he suggests [illegible] if one did not already have so[illegible] idea of how Bonaparte came [illegible] power, then one would gain a [illegible] poor idea of how things happe[illegible] from Michelet. Nor is he mo[illegible] cerned by the various ind[illegible] which Michelet makes [illegible] they are vigorously presen[illegible] What he sees is essentially a [illegible] triumph of *oxymology*, or, as [illegible] puts it, "on peut donner pour [illegible] lème à cette royauté du signifi[illegible] le règne de ce que j'ai pour[illegible] appeler la tentation étymologique". Just as a part of *A la recherche du temps perdu* is derived from a name, Guermantes, so, according [illegible] Barthes, a great part of Michelet's history is brought back to his [illegible] *leon's name, which is Bonaparte*, [illegible] meaning "le gros lot", the lottery [illegible] a game of chance. For Barthes [illegible] sort of historical vision is [illegible] striking than "la science [illegible] que". It is, *as it were*, an assert[illegible] of the rights of language.

Jean-Pierre Richard analyses [illegible] *Sorcière*, on the which as [illegible] ontogenesis and phylogenesis, must have made difficult listening for the audience at the Collège de France, although it is clear that M *Sorres has much praise for Michel*et as an observer as well as for his knowledge of the work of many contemporary experts (Werner, Pouchet, Maury, Chezallon, etc). More immediately acceptable is Jacques Scelcher's paper from the same meeting, "Le côté de la mort ou l'histoire comme clinique", which begins with the old story of Michelet on his death-bed overhearing the doctor say that he should be given clean sheets and a change of linen. "Le linge, docteur, le linge", cried Michelet "vous parlez du linge, mais savez-vous ce que c'est le linge ? Le linge du paysan, le linge de l'ouvrier, le linge, une grande chose, je veux en faire un livre. . . ." And so Michelet died, to be shrouded in the linen that was the subject of his last enthusiasm.

It is clear that just as Michelet himself drew nourishment from everything around him, so he has *become a sort of pabulum for a* large number of modern intellectuals. But as Linda Orr puts it, it would be wise not to adapt Michelet to fashionable currents of ideas, but rather simply to admire his energy, the vastness of his interests and the pre-Freudian frankness of his own introspections. There is enough to be said about Michelet and the archives (both in Paris and in the departments), about Michelet and art, portraits, architecture, museums, nature, religion and travel, without describing his work as an "anamnesis" or his language as a "*retreat from transparency*". Just as it was misleading to see him in a line of revolutionary thinkers culminating in Lenin, so it is probably unhelpful to see his influence as a process culminating in the work of Michel Foucault.

Professor Orr herself is occasionally guilty of blurring the significance of Michelet by bringing in poetic comparisons with Auden or Wallace Stevens, but her article on "Les 'Alternatives bizarres' de Michelet" in the special issue (in the November/December 1973 number of *Europe*) is an outstanding contribution and her full-length study of the natural history writings, *Jules Michelet : Nature, History and Language*, is a remarkable work of criticism. It is a pity that she has had to translate her quotations into what she calls twentieth-century American, but at least they are translated, and she carefully sustained argument. Michelet is one who has suffered all too much from the easy quote.

Professor Orr sees the natural history works as forming a fundamental counterpoint to the volumes of French history which Michelet was still writing and which otherwise might never have been completed, and she claims, with reason, that they help us to understand him as a whole. She thus confirms the notion that from the theses presented to the Sorbonne in 1819 (these surprisingly short works were published in the first volume of the new *Oeuvres complètes*) to *the political excitements* of the concluding years of the Second Empire (as shown in the final volume of the *Journal*), we see certain constant preoccupations. Of course it happened to Michelet as to everyone that he wrote pieces which served immediate ends. We can see this in the articles, the letters and the reflections in the *Journal*. But usually the purpose of publication has to be seen within a longer perspective, and those who have mocked at Michelet because he changed a sentence about the Middle Ages in a second edition, or because he *supposedly took to* writing about insects under the influence of a (young) wife who was a naturalist, or because after caressing his wife he confided to his *Journal* what many have thought but few have expressed, have missed the point.

Michelet proceeded by antitheses. Whether this was because politically he was always aware of conflict, or because intellectually he could not discover the unifying features of contemporary society, or because personally he felt responsible for the early death of his mother, he was always conscious of the contrast and antagonism that existed between one element and another. Thus the East is contrasted to the West, the country to the town, the Old World to the New; the moist is in conflict with the dry, the liquid with the solid; the war between England and France was the most natural of wars, as the burning light of the Revolution was contested by the damp mists and obscurities of distant Brittany.

And behind all these minor antitheses are the great conflicts between mother and son, male and female, individual and community, *liberty and fatality, life and death*. Everywhere there are opponents, bodies are split open, wholes disintegrate, laws are transgressed, animals are equipped for destruction, creatures come into existence which cease to have a place in the natural order, the solitary figure is forced back into the crowd. The historian is concerned with healing the breaches of the past, in discovering the fraternity that has brought men together, as in the Revolution "la fraternité a aplani tout obstacle, toutes les fédérations vont se confédérer avec elles, l'union tend à l'unité".

Within certain animals, especially the creatures of the sea, there was bisexuality and completeness. Michelet claimed to have within him "les deux sexes de l'esprit", and if "le peuple" is "l'ultra-sexe", his heroes are often androgynous (the idea of the androgyne would bring us back to Ballanche). In his marriage, Michelet is preoccupied by the idea of union with his wife, just as the historian is fascinated by those who bring the two terms of the antitheses together, so the husband forces himself into the most profound intimacies, recording digestive processes, defecations, menstruation, sexual experiences, dreams. His aim was union, and perhaps one of the innumerable keys to the process occurs in the *Journal* for September, 1869, when he writes, after watching his wife eating and drinking: "la sensualité est vive en moi quand je la vois bien vivre. Elle est tellement moi que ses fonctions ne sont toutes personnelles. Je sentis celle à Fontainebleau en 1857 : elle mangeait un fruit fondant, j'en ai eu le goût délicieux."

But it was usually only "l'unité" that was achieved, not "l'union". For Michelet history was an unending search. In contrast to Marx, he probably believed that it could never ultimately be successful. Professor Orr reminds us of Michelet's metaphor of the little girl playing with the wooden doll. She pretends it is real, she acts as if it were real, but she knows it is not alive. Perhaps it is significant that we are now learning to admire the historian of endeavour rather than the historian of certainty.

Evolving Essex

By David Pocock

AUDREY RICHARDS and JEAN ROBIN :
Some Elmdon Families
159pp. Saffron Walden: Audrey Richards. £1.25 (Available from Jean Robin, 10 Melbourne Place, Cambridge CB1 1EQ. £1.25 plus 18p.)

This is a genealogical history of six families in the Essex village of Elmdon. It has been collected over ten years by students of social anthropology at Cambridge under the guidance of Professor Audrey Richards from parish registers, land records, wills in the local Record Office and, of course, from local recollections. It is preceded by a general local history from the Domesday survey onwards by one of the students and Professor Richards has written a concluding chapter and an *historical appendix* on Tudor Elmdon.

The story that emerges has few surprises. It shows the early importance of marriage both as an internal bond and as an integrator of outsiders and the decline of this social function, together with the relative decline of the community itself from a time when local people for the most part lived and died locally to the present when substantially less than 50 per cent of the adult population is locally born. However, it is interesting to note in this connection that today as in the past more men stay put than women. Dependence on agriculture and on local trades has also declined as Elmdon, like the majority of villages throughout the country, has been absorbed into the wider community: the authors noted between 1964 and 1972 the increased number of retired outsiders who have come to settle in the village.

The book will be of particular interest to students of local history and amateur genealogists as a triumphant example of what can be achieved by an immense amount of painstaking detective work and infinite patience in the piecing together of fragments. It will of course also be valued by social historians as a meticulous reconstruction of marriage, kinship and occupation in one community over a period of over a hundred years and in some cases back into the seventeenth century.

The general reader will, I suspect, be more interested by the style of life in the English countryside less than a century ago when a woman had to raise a family of nine on her husband's earnings of twelve shillings a week. Audrey Richards collates stories from the Hammond family which describe the women's work and housekeeping. It surprised me to learn that the women expected to pick up from gleaning enough corn to last them for a twelve-month. Jean Robin gives a brief history of the remarkable Joseph Gamgee who rode across Europe to take up employment in Sicily early in the nineteenth century. He had learned to read and write, "to add and multiply" and by chance circumstances so favoured his family that two of his sons became professors. This story of the Gamgees is only one of many stories of social mobility that occur.

This book is the precursor of a more comprehensive study still in *preparation. Some Elmdon Families* was written for the people of Elmdon as something that they might pass on to their children. Let us hope that the sense of life will not in the larger study be lost in statistics, and that the people of Elmdon, and others, will be encouraged by its publication to store for the future the events and feelings of today which I suspect would make strange and interesting reading in the year 2077.

The second President

By Arthur Sheps

RALPH ADAMS BROWN:
The Presidency of John Adams
248pp. Kansas. $12.

John Adams was politically unlucky even by modern standards. During the four years of his presidency he was repudiated by important elements in his own party, maligned viciously by the opposition as a covert traitor, and finally rejected by the electorate. Adams has been better served by posterity, however. His papers are being superbly edited by a team of scholars, and those not yet published have been available on microfilm for the past two decades. Although *earlier historians were critical of Adams's administration, recent studies of the period and of the man have dealt with his presidency much more sympathetically.*

Ralph Adams Brown's study of Adams's presidency rightly concentrates on foreign policy. In this area the second President made important and lasting contributions to the stability and security of the new republic. Adams inherited from Washington's administration the deteriorating state of relations with the United States's former ally, France. Although he shared the distaste of Washington and Hamilton for revolutionary France, Adams tried to settle amicably differences about American rights as a neutral commercial power and its obligations to France as a result of the treaty signed between the two nations during the American War of Independence. The Directory's rejection of American overtures and Talleyrand's venal chicanery, culminating in the notorious XYZ affair, led eventually to the limited and undeclared war of 1798-99. These events played into the hands of the High Federalists, directed by Alexander Hamilton, who wanted to use an aggressively anti-French policy as an instrument with which to attack the "jacobinical" Jeffersonian republicans. The substantial increases in United States naval and military establishments were ostensibly directed against an external threat, but good evidence suggests that the army, like the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1799, was intended to be used against domestic political opposition. Adams himself sensibly preferred the navy to the army—the French threat after all was at sea—and tried to resist Hamilton's desire for personal military preeminence. Nor did Adams approve of the close alliance with Britain which some of Hamilton's friends sought.

Adams's patience, his good use of intelligence from his ministers in Europe, and his refusal to capitulate to the political opportunism of some of his Federalist colleagues, resulted in the avoidance of an all-out war with Napoleon's France and the signing of the Franco-American Convention of 1800. Serious and perhaps irreparable internal divisions were also thereby avoided. The young republic, as Adams understood, benefited from the peace with France, but the President lost the support of the extreme wing of his party and his chance for re-election.

Professor Brown's book is part of the American Presidency series which is supposed to draw on "the best in pertinent secondary literature" while still leaving room for original analysis and interpretation. The author has read widely in the Adams papers as well as in the secondary literature, but his account of Adams's presidency, while sound, has little new to offer, except in unessential details. The dense and detailed narrative is not strikingly lucid. There is an otiose striving for effect ("March 4, 1797, fell on a Saturday"), and some repetitiousness. Indeed, the opening sentence of the book does not inspire confidence. "John Adams", Professor Brown writes, "is seldom emphasized as one of the great Americans." *Both the sense and sentiment are askew here. Professor Brown wants to advance a case for the greatness of Adams as a president.* In fact, he often sounds like a lawyer advancing a brief. However, there is no need for him to plead so vehemently. The modern scholarship upon which he draws to establish his claims has not been niggardly in its appreciation of Adams's accomplishments during his presidency. Perhaps Professor Brown goes further than other students of the period in crediting Adams with ironic behaviour after the release of the XYZ documents and in his relations with his political opponents. But his account indicates little if Adams's frustration as a President.

The complex question of the relationship of Adams's political thought to his actions in office is ignored. Adams was an unusually reflective president, but his idea of the virtuous republic left him suspended between Hamilton and Jefferson. Similarly he lacked the expansiveness of vision which, in different ways, both these great men had for the future of the republic. It is true, as Professor Brown points out, that Adams's opponents never understood fully the constraints of the political and diplomatic climates within which he had to operate. Historians today, however, are aware of the importance of Adams's work in securing tranquillity at home and abroad. Adams's greatness lay in his sacrificing his political future to this necessary and useful peace and in refusing to subordinate public policy to party ends.

Politics in the Age of Peel **(496pp. Hassocks, Sussex: Harvester. £10.95) is a new edition of the study by Norman Gash, first published in 1953. The first edition was described in the *TLS* (July 3, 1953) as "exact" and "readable", "To most mortals", wrote the reviewer, "the details of the Reform Bill, their effect on the constituencies and the play of all these influences on national politics are a sad tangle and it is pleasant after reading this book to feel the light breaking through the dark places." In his new introduction, Professor Gash notes that "closer investigation has on the whole strengthened the view that electoral politics in the immediate post-reform era was a diverse and complicated process for which there are few simple explanations".**

The Twin Stars, CASTOR & POLLUX

Parliamentary pairing: George Barclay and Charles Stuart, concurrent MPs for Bridport in Dorset, apotheosized as Castor and Pollux in May 1799, by Gillray. From The Satirical Etchings of James Gillray *(see cover).*

Paraguay's paramour

By Malcolm Deas

ALYN BRODSKY:
Madame Lynch and Friend
312pp. Cassell. £4.50.

Poor Madame Lynch. Eliza Lynch was born in Cork in 1835. Little is known about her background or childhood. She was taken to France about the age of ten, and she was married at fifteen to a French army officer. The marriage did not last. Before she was yet twenty, she became the mistress of Francisco Solano López, who was to succeed his father as ruler of Paraguay. She went to Asunción with him in 1855, and remained with him until his death at Cerro Corá in 1870 ended the six-year war his country fought against Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay. After the war she went back to France, but returned once to Paraguay in an unsuccessful attempt to make claims. For most of the rest of her life she lived obscurely in Paris. She died in 1886, and was dead for two days before anybody noticed. Since then she has been the victim of much prurient and romantic writing, of which *Madame Lynch and Friend* is the latest example.

Madame Lynch may have been a courtesan, though certainly she cannot have been so for long; she may have been, in that curious old phrase, "no better than she should have been". But she certainly had courage, loyalty and style. Alyn Brodsky appears to have been an American diplomat, though not for long, and his book is a great deal worse than it might have been had he adopted a less condescending attitude to his subjects, and approached their drama with less levity.

He does not understand the politics of the River Plate of that time, though the work of Pelham H. Box is in his bibliography. He makes López into a maniac and a monster, and fails to make him or his miscalculations the least bit credible. Scant and unreliable evidence is relentlessly interpreted to show the dictator and Madame Lynch in the worst light, from the nasty title to the mean-spirited epilogue. Mr Brodsky cannot even restrain himself from making offensive remarks about their surviving descendants. There are a great many errors of fact as well: Bismark is referred to as the Iron Duke, and toucans are made to swoop on flying fish.

Preventing the pox

By J. F. Watkins

PETER RAZZELL:
Edward Jenner's Cowpox Vaccine: The History of A Medical Myth
130pp. Firle, Sussex: Caliban Books. £10.

The Oriental practice of inoculation against smallpox, which may have originated in the sixteenth observation that second attacks of the disease do not occur, was introduced into England by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu in 1717, or thereabouts. Matter from a pustule was introduced into the skin of the arm of a healthy individual by scarification with a needle or lancet. The smallpox virus usually enters the body by way of the pharynx. Introduction by the subcutaneous route alters the timing of events: that immunity can develop before the stage of invasion. Most of the inoculated developed smallpox pustules at the site of inoculation; they often became ill, with fever, for some days, and occasionally suffered a full-blown attack of smallpox. Some, of course, died. Nevertheless, the risk was considered worthwhile, and during the eighteenth century thousands submitted themselves to the ritual of variolation, as it was called. It should be remembered that the practitioners of variolation had no knowledge of the immunological mechanisms responsible for the success; that understanding would not come until the twentieth century, and even today is incomplete.

In 1796, we are taught, along came Edward Jenner. Struck, the story has it, by the flawless complexions of the milkmaids in his rural practice, he inquired of them the reason. Oh, Sir," said the blushing demurely, "we cannot take the smallpox for we have had the cowpox." Whereupon, Jenner with astonishing insight, conceived the idea of inoculating patients with the material from pustules found on the udders of a cow afflicted with cowpox. The method worked, and he received universal acclaim. Napoleon. But this, it seems, is a myth. What really happened, according to Peter Razzell's painstaking monograph, was that he took his own stock of cowpox vaccine had run low, and not working very well. Jenner sent to a London colleague, a Dr Woodville, for fresh supplies. cows with cowpox not being so common, Woodville sent Jenner a fresh vaccine, which he had accidentally contaminated with smallpox virus. It is with the evidence for this contamination that the book is chiefly concerned, and the evidence is extremely convincing. Jenner propagated the vaccine by arm to arm passage, and sent samples to all over the world, believing that it was pure cowpox material. It was highly effective in conferring protection, although it caused a few smallpox outbreaks. Eventually, as a result of continued passage from arm to arm, the virus became attenuated, so that it could protect without causing smallpox. The Jenner's vaccine, which spared countless numbers the misery of the disease, was not, after all, cowpox, but attenuated smallpox. Not only that, cowpox itself, when used in the pure state, seems to have been of low efficacy in immunization.

Where does this leave Jenner's reputation? Mr Razzell, who does not attempt to answer the question, which is for philosophers, if Jenner had not initiated vaccination with cowpox it is almost certain that variolation would have persisted as the only method of protection well into the twentieth century, until some virologist or bacteriologist set out to develop an attenuated virus in the laboratory. The book, a slim paperback, is written in the style of a communication to a learned journal, and is a small literary mark, but the research has been thorough, the evidence is carefully presented, and the conclusions seem inescapable. At £10 a copy it is not likely to reach a wide audience.

Erica, or little by little

By Peter Keating

ERICA JONG:
How to Save Your Own Life
310pp.
Loveroot
114pp.
Secker and Warburg. £3.90 each.

Fear of Flying ends with Isadora Wing returning to her husband Bennett. With her sexual adventures in Europe temporarily over, a chance to live out her fantasy of a "zipless fuck" turned down, and the brief experience of being "utterly free" acknowledged as the "most terrifying sensation" she has ever known, Isadora lies soaking contentedly in a hotel bath. She admires her body ("A nice body. Mine. I decided to keep it") and waits for Bennett to join her.

How To Save Your Own Life takes up the story several years later. Isadora is now the author of a best-selling erotic novel, *Candida Confessus*, which has brought her personal notoriety and financial independence, though she is still scared of flying. By the end of *How To Save Your Own Life* she has left Bennett for a hippie poet: "She opened her eyes for a split second and looked at him sucking her breasts, this red-bearded baby with the huge hard cock, this man, this prodigious miracle, this wonder." It is true love. The nice body is surrendered and with it everything else: "It was no good. All her feminism, all her independence, all her fame had come to this, this helplessness, this need. She needed him. She needed this man."

Romance is back! Erica Jong's publishers clearly understand. They describe *How To Save Your Own Life* as a "remarkably romantic love story", and Isadora herself boasts of being a "romantic". What they mean is that within the world of this novel, and the literary tradition to which it belongs, sexual love is the only thing, ultimately, that matters. It is this that women desire above all else; it is this that gives meaning and justification to their lives. Josh, the hippie lover, understands:

> They had fought. A terrible fight in which he said she was a ravenous, insatiable cunt, and she said he had never satisfied her, never, and he said she might as well go out and find other men to fuck because he couldn't satisfy her, couldn't, wouldn't, didn't care, and turned with his back to her in bed.

He would not fuck her. She could beg and plead for it and he would not.

At one moment of ironic literary self-consciousness Isadora calls upon the Muses of novels or of her contemporaries, "Kate, Robin and Jill", to help her find the right tone, but properly speaking she should be invoking the shades of Rhoda, Elinor, and Edith:

> She had fought until the unequal struggle had left her exhausted and helpless in his arms, until her whole body was one agonized ache from the brutal hands that forced her to compliance, until her courageous spirit was crushed by the realization of her own powerlessness.

There are differences, of course. E. M. Hull's Sheik Ahmed Ben Hassan is raping Diana, the well-bred young English girl, while Isadora and Josh are, theoretically at least, consenting adults; though perhaps the real differences between the Diana who learns to like being raped and the Isadora who begs and pleads to be fucked are not great. What they share is the conviction that life is impossible without their Man, their "red-bearded baby with the huge hard cock".

The sexual freedom that Isadora enjoys seems neither liberating nor degrading. It is largely irrelevant: "I suddenly realize that I could fuck a different man every weekday afternoon and still not feel contented. Adultery is no solution, only a diversion." Many diversions, in fact, and all leading to true love. Marriage to Bennett, going down on another woman, taking part in an orgy, comforting an old friend: "Soon I was down on my knees sucking his cock to prove to him that somewhere in all that unfulfilment and unhappiness he had a friend." At least this experience produces a joke ("My mouth was in it, but not my heart") and one that explains much. The heart is preserved, hoarded, kept pure and chaste, like old-fashioned virginity, for Mr Right. Until he arrives Isadora keeps in practice: "None of that 'I don't mind stuff' for me; my feelings are right there up front. My cunt growls, howls, bays at the moon."

How To Save Your Own Life is not, however, merely confessional: it is a novel with a message, and this also is something it shares with the great tradition of romantic fiction. It would be hard to imagine admirers of Henry James, or Conrad, or Harold Pinter, writing to them for advice on how to live, but Rhoda, and Elinor, and Edith were expected to guide and govern the lives of their more daring or lonely readers, and so is Isadora. The success of *Candida Confessus* makes Isadora realize that for all her own feelings of guilt and inadequacy, the heroine of her novel has become a model, an inspiration, for countless women: "As Candida felt, so felt the nation. And no one could have been more surprised than her creator." There is nothing Isadora can do to help. She answers the pathetically lonely letters she receives with a few neutrally encouraging lines, knowing that she must save herself before she can advise others. When a close friend and fellow poet commits suicide, leaving behind her a blank notebook and the suggested title "How To Save Your Own Life", Isadora is determined to conquer her fear of flying.

The message is: be happy, be joyful, reject cynicism, seek for true love—"Fly and live to tell the tale!" The moment when Isadora decides on this is a turning point of *How To Save Your Own Life*; it is the main theme of the love poems addressed to Josh which are appended to the novel, and it recurs in the new volume of Erica Jong's poems *Loveroot*:

> Doom is cheap.
> If the apocalypse is coming,
> Let us wait for it in joy.

But joy can also be cheap if it is opposed so bleakly to doom, and it is the most serious limitation of romantic fiction that it can handle only extremes of experience.

It is not being cynical to say that Isadora's experiences as a "wise-ass Jewish girl" would not be so gullible if she were not sexually attractive, famous and rich. She is, of course, a poet as well, but the poetry is as confessional as the best-selling novel:

> Oh the orgies in stationery stores!
> The love of printer's ink and thick
> new pads!
> A poet has to fall in love to write.
> Her bed is heaped with papers, or
> with men.
> That is certainly neat, but in the
> context of *How To Save Your Own Life* the Popean wit rebounds upon the poet: the bed is only heaped with papers because the man is not there:
> I keep your pillow pressed down
> with my books.
> They leave an indentation like your
> head.
> If I can't have you here, I'll take
> cold type—
> & words: the warmest things there
> are—
> but you.

Here, and in *Loveroot*, every activity takes second place to sexual love:

> The sky is clearer when I'm not in
> heat,
> & the poems
> are colder.

The advice is, cast off cynicism and experience joy, but too often this comes over as find your man and all will be well. It is not simply a matter of the words being colder when the writer is "not in heat". Quite the contrary really, for humour tends to disappear when romantic love is taken too seriously. Erica Jong trying to convey unhappiness is no more believable than Isadora in her moods of sadness: "I'm forever trying to convince my friends and family that I bleed when stabbed—but no one believes me because I look so jaunty."

And how could she expect anything else? Isadora irreverent, cynical, outrageous, or jaunty, is delightful. She is at her most convincing when she portrays the ridiculous or bizarre; when she is classifying the lavatories of Europe, or trying to convey an adolescent girl's bewilderment at the "hidden-ness" of her body, or, in one of the funniest episodes in *How To Save Your Own Life*, she strives desperately, and inexpertly, to bring off her lesbian friend. She eventually succeeds and Rosanna is left in tears of gratitude "with the bulging green base of a Dom Pérignon bottle protruding from her reluctant cunt".

But Isadora, "the insatiable cunt", in love and proclaiming it to the world, is a bore: "'I love your pee, your farts, your shit, your tight snatch', he said digging his nails into her ass, and then he pulled her cunt down on his upraised cock like a glove over a finger. 'Do you want my sperm', he asked rhetorically." Perhaps Sheik Ahmed Ben Hassan said much the same thing to Diana in his desert tent: if he did E. M. Hull chose not to record it for posterity. But then E. M. Hull's sense of the ridiculous was not highly developed. Erica Jong's is, and it would be sad if she goes on allowing it to be suppressed.

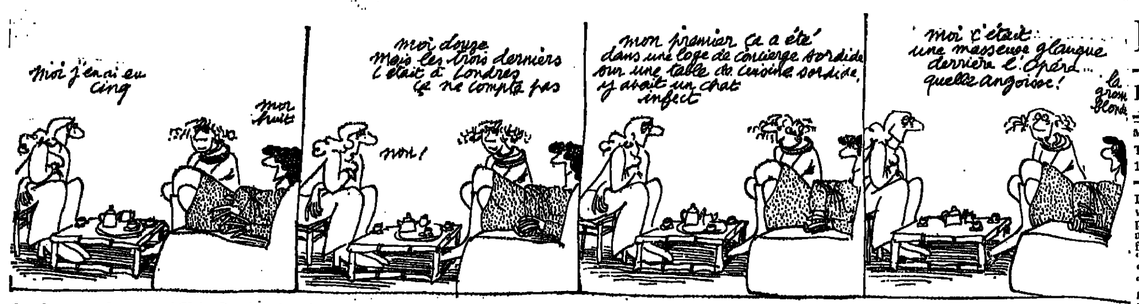
A fatal pass

GWYNETH CRAVENS and JOHN S. MARR:
The Black Death
302pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £4.50.

It's been as bumper a year for fictional disasters as for real ones—from all angles the devil coming among us having great wrath. And here is a superior example of the genre. New York is itself, broke, garbage-strewn, [illegible] under-manned, short-tempered and diversely nutty ("I am God's spokesperson and I am going to tell you God's plan even though you want to marry me", remarks one of the more innocuous crazies). Meanwhile out in California a girl is bitten by a ground squirrel just before boarding the bus back East. She coughs in the face of the ponce who tries to pick her up at the Port Authority Terminal, at a taxi-driver, at a janitor. When she dies of pneumonic plague, there are a couple of hundred contacts to be traced by devoted, sensitive David Hart and his team, led by Dolores Rodriguez, who, as well as having a mouth like a "succulent tropical fruit", is an ace epidemiological nurse. They nearly succeed, but they don't know about the ponce and his contacts, and within a week Manhattan is a banquet hall for rats and hoodlums. (Incredible? Ten thousand a day died in Constantinople in Justinian's time, according to Gibbon, and though they didn't have turnpike cars they didn't have the subway either.)

In Washington, the President's national security adviser, a military gentleman in the Cumberland-Westmoreland tradition, with a nasty secret, is obsessed with the janitor's Cuban and CIA connections, and prepares to write off New York—"area-wide instant decontamination" is the phrase. It's clear that Marr (who, like his hero, is head of the New York Bureau of Preventable Diseases) thinks that the federal government has already done so. The authors' anger is one of the book's strengths: another is that the medical data are fascinating, authoritative and clear. The local colour/human interest is only occasionally obtrusive ("at Eighty-Sixth Street Hart and Andrews boarded the Uptown Local") and there is an amazing climax when the survivors, *ex hypothesi* those not given to panic, organize a gigantic prophylactic pop festival in Central Park, not realizing what the rest of the nation has in store for them.

Eric Korn



Opening scenes from one of Claire Bretécher's strip cartoons.

Bretonnes with flair

By Alastair Forbes

Way back before the First World War, when Arthur Marshall was still in pinafores, the best girls' own paper across the Channel was called *La Semaine de Suzette*. It was in its pages that there first made her appearance Annaïk Labornez, whose birth in Clocher-les-Bécasses, near Quimper, coincided with the passage, across the sky above the Standing Stones, of flights of geese and snipe, both synonyms for simpletons; this caused her to be nicknamed "Bécassine" by her Uncle Corentin, who later discovered that she was being weaned not on to cows' but asses' milk.

Her adventures as she grew up, "figure ronde, menton rond, nez rond, yeux ronds", a clumsy Malaprop but occasionally a far from dumb cluck, were enchantingly illustrated by Pinchon, but it is the text by his colleague Caumery that makes the rereading of these recently reissued volumes such a joy (a dozen more are still out of print), recapturing a France of which few now can have even "une certaine idée". Although Brittany had by then been French for more than 400 years, it was still pathetically poor, its agriculture primitive, but there were as yet no symptoms visible of separatism. Indeed the local grandee, "Monsieur le Marquis de Grand-Air, très savant, l'obligeance en personne", helps the village organize a mid-Lenten pageant commemorating Duchesse Anne's marriage in the fifteenth century to Charles VIII, which brought Brittany under French rule and stuck a snipe's beak on to the French map's hexagon. On the Marquis's death, the widowed Madame de Grand-Air, as *grande dame* as her husband had been *grand seigneur* and who on only one single occasion in all these albums "*souhaite du mal à son prochain*", adopts a little orphaned girl, Loulotte, to whom Bécassine is appointed *bonne*—Miss Nelly, the family's English governess, having rather unaccountably disappeared at about the same time as *feu Monsieur le Marquis*, though no scandal or foul play is hinted at.

The ambience is fairly anglophile. The dog is called Dick. There is also a "dame Anglaise qui a toujours des trésors d'indulgence pour Bécassine". She turns out to be called Miss Spikinglish. Back in Paris, in the Bois and the Tuileries, where wet-nurses with taffeta-tartan ribbons can still be seen, Loulotte plays with a boy named Toto looked after by an English Miss who intervenes in a nasty squabble: "[illegible] rude décision propre à sa race". A more sinister note is struck when she advises Bécassine how to handle the somewhat spoilt Loulotte. "Oh! vous deviez donc la fouetter!"—the old *vice anglais* trying to evangelize again. During the war, Bécassine becomes very chummy with all the Allies but makes a particular friend of one of Colonel Bramble's kilted subordinates, Major Tacy-Turn, who has a bulldog called (and the spit and image of) Hindenburg, and a fiancée called Miss Daisy Grace; but she fails to pick up much English on a quick trip to wartime London in 1916.

Madame de Grand-Air is a kindly employer to her ten servants who weep copiously when, as an economy measure in the 1920s, some of them have to be sacked, while she moves into a [illegible] kindliness and considerateness on the part of what are now called *les partenaires sociaux* of a sort, alas, seldom if ever seen today. Bécassine, for instance, though she enjoys rude health, gets a fearful spell of vertigo in the Alps, but remembers herself enough before passing out to exclaim: "Je vais mourir. Madame voudra bien m'excuser. Je lui demande pardon de l'embarras que ça va lui donner." My mind goes back to my own Brittany childhood when we all laughed at the apple-cheeked nursemaid Félicie who was always sending for the curé and the Last Sacraments every time she had a cold—but we did not know that she was tubercular and that her cold was soon to prove, like the Duchess of Malfi's, to be an everlasting one.

At school the dunce Bécassine had won a special *Prix de Bonté*. And the Marquise's acquaintance la Baronne Lémable (get it?) is *la bonté même*. But all that *bonté* manages not to become a bore. Though it is the high tide of French imperialism there is little arrogance. Even the wartime jokes about negro workers in a chocolate factory in the Rue du Maroc are without malice. Besides his day-to-day Upstairs Downstairs doings, Caumery is wonderfully inventive with his sub-plots, especially those involving Madame de Grand-Air's old friend, the eccentric phrenologist Monsieur Proey-Eminans, a Jacques Tati character before his time who turns up all over the place, always recognizing that Bécassine possesses, as he says, "*du Flair*". The pleasing patchwork of Pinchon's coloured drawings enjoyably instructs us as to how both halves lived on the other side of the Channel in the first quarter of the century. Bécassine even wins a lottery and wants to give it to Loulotte for a dowry ("Ça me fait peine pour Madame qui n'est plus riche") but in the nick of time Madame gets news of "le gain d'un procès important qui me rend sinon la richesse, du moins l'aisance", in short what we all pray for. As for the motoring bits, they are better than a visit to Lord Montagu at Beaulieu. All these Bécassine books should be made available to the passengers in the backs of the GB-plated station-wagons on their way to the Costa Dordogna that increasingly crowd the roads south from Roscoff and St Malo. They show a very different Brittany to the one they now see, with a Communist mayor in Rennes and *Breizh Libre* graffiti galore on the grey stone walls.

Before it was dwarfed by that infernal tower, symbol of all that was worst about Gaullist and Pompidolian France, turning into Américain what should have been Armoricain (just like the lobster), the Gare Montparnasse used to pullulate with Bretonnes come to seek jobs in Paris. They were not all Bécassines and they were not all Suzy Solidors either. But none of them was in the slightest bit like the incomparable Claire Bretécher from Nantes, beautiful, clever, funny, shortsighted, suspicious and shy, who hit the capital more than a decade ago, too timid then even to show any editor or publisher her portfolio of highly original drawings and forced at first to be a reluctant art-teacher in the suburbs. In francophone Europe the strip cartoon, far more than in Bécassine's days even, was a respected discipline at the height of its popularity. The Belgian Hergé's Tintin was about to be challenged by the French Goscinny's Astérix and company. *Spirou* and *Pilote* had become obligatory reading for all ages. In both papers, Bretécher finally managed to make her breakthrough to the position of first woman strip cartoonist in France before becoming what she is today, simply the best cartoonist *tout court*.

She claims to have completely "blown" (*loupé*) her childhood, and she very nearly blew the rest in a prolonged bout of psychoanalysis, today a principal target of her scorn. Since then success has brought contentment, a marvellous studio to work in, with or without the spur of deadline panic, and the right man with whom to share the shareable part of her life. A by-product of this has been her incredibly funny and affectionate way of turning a relentless, contact-lensed eye on mothers and children, a subject on which she is unbeatable. Certainly by far the smartest thing Jean Daniel ever did in journalism was to invite her to do a weekly cartoon for his *Nouvel Observateur* in which she was offered free rein to satirize "La Gauche bien pensante et aujourd'hui écologiste". For nearly three years her page has been the first I turn to in the *Observateur* every week, and she has never failed to make me smile, often succeeding in making me laugh out loud.

The world she makes fun of is the one she lives in, never missing any of its tricks. Roland Barthes has called her France's best living sociologist and he is quite right. If sometimes one senses her humour to be a shade pessimistic and depressed, it is because, like Barthes, she suffers despairs in the plural so much more acceptable than despair in the singular. A quick look at a few pages of either volume of her latest collection, *Les Frustrés*, is enough to show that Britain has not a single cartoonist to come near her. She has now taken to publishing her own work in book form so that her fortune can better hope to equal her fame. I hope Roy Jenkins turns to her page every Monday morning, as part of his belated immersion course in French, in this case the most idiomatic 1977 Parigot French, often phonetically spelt. He might even get her to lunch one day. President Giscard d'Estaing, an admirer who once successfully inveigled her to a meal at the Elysée, could give him an introduction. *Vive Bretécher* and her *flair*, surely the best thing out of Brittany since Bécassine.

Caumery: *L'Enfance de Bécassine. Bécassine en Apprentissage. Bécassine pendant La Grande Guerre. Bécassine chez les Alliés. L'Automobile de Bécassine. Bécassine au Pays Basque. Bécassine chez les Turcs. Bécassine Mobilisée. Bécassine Alpiniste. Bécassine, son oncle et leurs amis.* Illustrations by Pinchon. 64pp each. Editions Gautier-Languereau. 27.50 fr each.
Claire Bretécher: *Les Gnangnan. Les Naufragés.* Editions Jacques Glénat.
Salades de Saison. Les Angoisses de Cellulite. Les Etats d'âme de Cellulite. Editions Dargaud.
Les Frustrés. Volumes 1 and 2 published by the author.

Celluloid celebrants

By Anthony Burgess

PHILIP OAKES (Editor):
The Film Addict's Archive
212pp. Elm Tree Books. £5.95.

Real film addicts do not need books—except perhaps for *Agee on Film*, the trade annuals, and that monumental guide to old movies on television obtainable only in America. They need to live in Manhattan, where television is a twenty-four-hour film museum and bughouses for buffs abound. Rome and Paris are better than London for *cinémas d'essai*, but an old Karloff or Valentino film on RAI or ORTF is a fanfared event, whereas in New York or Los Angeles you can take it in your insomniac stride. The true addict has, in fact, little time for reading. Philip Oakes's anthology is really for amateurs of good writing which has happened to pick on cinema as a subject. After all, as Oakes tells us in his introduction (the only piece of real buff prose in the book), "movies are something we live with (if not by). They entertain us. They divert us. But they also make us what we are. . . . They are part of our experience". This means that literature, whether it wants to or not, has to take notice of film.

Kipling's "Mrs Bathurst" is here because, published in 1904, it was the first piece of fiction to make use of the experience of looking at the Biograph. It can be taken mainly as a test for people who claim to know when literature first deigned to mention movies. Gore Vidal was about the only one of those Mr Oakes asked who knew it. Mr Oakes admires Vidal as a master of many media, and he gives us an excerpt from *Myra Breckinridge*. Alas, that book cannot really be excerpted, since its chief merit lies in its being a compendium of film disguised as a novel; it has to be swallowed whole. The same is true, surely, of *The Day of the Locust* and *The Last Tycoon*. It was bad timing to present chunks of these, since both have recently been filmed, and the paperbacks have been around (look at the cost of this hardback). There is a fine chapter from *What Makes Sammy Run?*—the one where Sammy does the old switcheroo on *Rain* for a film that is to be called *Monsoon* and is to have as finale George Raft threshing in the swollen seas, yelling: "Get me outa here, God, and I'll work like a bastard for ya." There is nothing from Budd Schulberg's better novel *The Disenchanted*, about the last Hollywood days of Scott Fitzgerald. This, if anyone's interested, is a novel of which I for one have had at least four copies, and I've read each of them five times.

I was glad to have Thurber's "The Man Who Hated Moonbaum" and sorry to be reminded of his regret at letting Goldwyn turn Danny Kaye loose on the Walter Mitty story. The chapter from Alison Lurie's *The Nowhere City* contains some fine dialogue:

> "Ah, Maxie, you know it's not like that", Glory protested throatily. "I mean, considering he's a complete lunk-head and a screaming queer, Gunn's a pretty straight guy. And he's a real dancer. He's got a style that won't quit. . . . You really figure he'll be all broken up if I don't go out with him?"
>
> Maxie shrugged. "A guy like that, naturally he's sensitive. Already he's got the idea he can't make it with girls, not even as a friend. . . . An incident like this comes along and proves it, there's still less chance he's ever going to be able to relate normally."
>
> "Gee, you sound like my husband", Glory said.

The extract from Isherwood's *Prater Violet* is, I now see, the most lovingly exact re-creation of the shooting experience (Imperial Bulldog Studios at Fulham) to be found in all film fiction.

The really compelling part of the anthology may well be to most readers (especially those who already know the prose) the poetry. It would have been delightful to have a film verse anthology, but the notion is as commercially impracticable as a movie of *The Wreck of the Deutschland*. There is a poem by Robert Lowell for Harpo Marx ("You dumbly memorized an unwritten script . . .") and one by Tom Raworth called "Claudette Colbert by Billy Wilder":

all those bugles blowing
in the ears of a confused liberal
so long
pretty woman
wake me up at the part where he
claims Milwaukee

A long poem by John Hollander, "Movie-Going", celebrates not films but cinemas, Manhattan ones this reader remembers well, probably already demolished to make way for more supermarkets:

. . . the SYMPHONY had a
decorative disk
With elongated 'twenties nudes
[illegible]
(Around the corner the THALIA
daughter of memory I owed
Her life to Foreign Hits . . .)

It seems impossible to celebrate cinema in verse without a dying fall. Martin Bell's elegy on Eddie Cantor should have been here.

There is perhaps a place in the collection for a film addict's anthology that eschews literature *about* the movies and presents bits of the raw stuff itself—the old scene where Bogart says to play it again, a passage from the ur-*King Kong* (which I once saw in a Kota Bharu cinema actually owned by a Chinese called King Kong). Also perhaps a scene or two from *The Dynasts* with Hardy as scenarist before the medium had been invented, and part of the remarkable *Paradise Lost* script of John Collier, with additional dialogue by G. M. Hopkins. They always say film is a visual medium, but it is the things said we remember: this is bigger than both of us; God is a jealous God; this could be the beginning of a wonderful friendship; nobody's perfect. What is memorable is always a kind of literature. That brings me back to the beginning again.

In the British Film Institute's latest pamphlet, *New Cinema in Spain* (55pp. Paperback, 55p), Vicente Molina-Foix outlines the history of Spanish cinema from the strict censorship of the post-Civil War period through the beginnings of revival and the "New Spanish Cinema" of the 1960s, up to the present day. A "Dictionary of New Spanish Film-makers" includes twenty-nine brief biographies, and appendixes cover the censorship regulations of 1963 and 1975 and polls of best Spanish films. The author is a critic, novelist and lecturer who now lives in [illegible]

Ministry of Funny Thoughts

By Richard Mayne

MILES KINGTON (Editor):
The World of Alphonse Allais
160pp. Chatto and Windus. £4.50.

In the indolent days of the Essay, when threadbare literati used to pose as gentlemen of leisure, "wit" and "humour" were great subjects for mock-debate, like "liberty" and "licence", or "happiness" and "pleasure". So was the notion of "national character". Put them together, and vistas of unverifiable assertion stretch as far as the eye can see. "Gallic wit" and "British humour" are the two halves of an antithesis that outlives the centuries, handed down like the recipe for some regional gunge from one bad cook to the next.

In an exhaustive study of such stereotypes, *French and English*, Richard Faber wrote:

> The wit/humour antithesis has been readily enough accepted on both sides of the Channel. Even in the eighteenth century, according to the Abbé le Blanc, the English regarded humour "as a thing which has only been given to their Nation". French appreciation of English humour, as of Shakespeare, has developed slowly, but more or less surely. The English have always given the French good marks for wit.

Good marks? Not necessarily. A British observer in 1598 told the story of a dying Frenchman receiving the last sacrament but refusing the Host. "Forgive me", he told the priest, "but I never eat meat on a Friday." The narrator concluded that Frenchmen would sacrifice their souls to a *bon mot*. Not so the British. "Taine", says Mr Faber, continuing the passage just quoted, "found that they freely acknowledged French taste and wit; they themselves, he thought, did not really know how to enjoy conversation, but he conceded that their humour was tonic, if somewhat savage."

As in most such semantic shuttlecock, no one defines his terms. But if "Gallic wit" in this context has overtones, they probably suggest the barbed elegance of a dandy, or the fanged exchanges of fashionable hostesses—something thin and brittle, but sharp. Jean Cocteau was witty; so, more pointedly, was Voltaire. Discomfort is implied, and rivalry, keeping up with the quizzing-glasses in a forbidding formal game. The very word "wit" has a lash in it.

"Humour", by contrast, has a booming, humming, ruminating sound, suggesting humus and the rustic earth. It goes with "humorous"—i.e., not very funny; gentle, bumbling good-nature of the all-well-mustn't-grumble variety; a moral stance, not a salon attitude; looking on the brighter side. Lexicographers would trace it back to "humours" and Ben Jonson; but the typical exemplar of "humour" in this sense is probably Sydney Smith or Mike Yarwood's scriptwriter, willing to strike and yet afraid to wound. Characteristically, it was a wit who wrote the original of that last misquotation, visiting his own wounds on the world. There was surely something "Gallic" about Alexander Pope.

Thus set out, the antithesis sounds plausible. For wit, Marivaux; for humour, Shakespeare or Sheridan. For France, verbal felicity; for Britain, comic situations. Fashion *v* profundity; neatness *v* strength. "I hate scarce smiles," said Blake: "I love laughing." Most such generalizations flatter self-esteem.

Yet, contrary to the cliché, exceptions invalidate the rule. Pope was one of them; Wilde was surely another. And on the far side of the Channel, humorists abound. Was Rabelais a wit? Was Molière? Hardly, and looking more closely at popular culture, one begins to suspect that those impressed by "Gallic wit" have seen only the cream and missed the custard-pie. One day at a French airport bookstall, I heard an American visitor ask for "un magasin d'humeur". It sounded like a 1920s ballet—"The Bad-tempered Boutique"—and he found it; he was crossly turned away. But he could have had his humour magazine, full of rather obvious anecdotes and mildly amusing cartoons. And if he had gone to the cinema, he could have seen one of those French films that seldom cross the Channel—a Louis de Funès caper, for example, all excitable music, grimacing, and eye-popping farce. As for farce in the theatre, from Labiche through Feydeau to Francis Blanche: that, good as it is, remains "humorous" rather than "witty", however "saucy" it used to seem. Even *chansonniers* like the late Fernand Raynaud deal as much in comic situation as in glacial verbal wit.

The funniest writer in France now that Raymond Queneau is dead is probably Pierre Daninos. Queneau was undoubtedly "witty", a rather sour, pessimistic artist hiding his misanthropy, like a harsher Evelyn Waugh, behind dazzling verbal technique; impaling himself and his specimens, like Wyndham Lewis in *The Apes of God*, on sharp, slow-motion scrutiny of folly, meanness, and mannerism. But if Queneau exemplified wit, Daninos incarnates humour. In a coma after a near-fatal car crash, he first reassured his wife that all was well when his delirium began to be funny: half-dead, he still made people laugh. His best-known character, "Major Thompson", is not—as André Maurois's "Colonel Bramble" was—a bemused Frenchman's portrait of a British military man: unlike Maurois, Daninos is no English linguist. The gallant major is a foil, not a caricature—a mere device for exposing, through humorous foreign eyes, the quirkish behaviour of the French. He recalls, in this respect, *Les lettres persanes* of Montesquieu or Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World*. And if in later books Daninos indulges more freely his taste for puns and his eye for verbal inconsistencies, his real target remains human behaviour: his humour is sane and warm. Among French cartoonists, his closest counterpart is the incomparable Sempé, a fellow humanist equally lacking in contempt.

Alongside the harsh legend, in other words, runs a sunny vein of true French humour, *cocasse* rather than merely *spirituel*. And one of its earlier exponents has recently been introduced to English readers, through Miles Kington's selection and translation of *The World of Alphonse Allais*. Allais was born in 1854 and died in 1905. His sketches were published in a series of humour magazines, *Le Chat noir*, *Le Journal*, *Le Sourire*; he also wrote a novel, and painted the first abstract picture—for a spoof exhibition called *Le Salon des Incohérents*. Mr Kington explains:

> Allais's contribution to this show . . . was a large, completely black rectangular canvas. It was entitled "Negroes Fighting in a Cave at Night". Encouraged by the success of this trail-blazing work, he followed it with six others, among them a totally white rectangle called "Anaemic Young Girls Going to their First Communion through a Blizzard" and a red composition entitled "Apoplectic Cardinals Harvesting Tomatoes by the Red Sea".

It seems hardly surprising that Allais should appeal to the literary editor of *Punch*. His inventions—a necromobile for cremating corpses on the way to their funerals, a frosted glass aquarium for shy fish—smacked of Heath Robinson; his pranks, real or invented, prefigured Jonathan Routh and *Candid Camera*; his anecdotes were often shaggy-dog stories before their time. And anyone who enjoys *Monty Python* is likely to smile, if no more, at this Victorian precursor of that slightly self-indulgent flying circus, claiming in one characteristic piece to be "the current holder of the one millimetre free style bicycling record".

Mr Kington's selection, from countless undying ephemera, gives a fair picture of Allais's uneven output, and his translations are jaunty and adroit. He tends to exaggerate the novelty of his *trouvaille*: "Drop his name at any gathering of well-read people and it will sink to the bottom of an immediate silence." That may be true of Britain; but in France, *pace* Mr Kington, Allais is certainly now "a household name". Three collections of his articles have been published in the paperback Livre de poche series, and have sold briskly, aided in part by pert little illustrations from the cartoonist Siné.

In English, and without the illustrations, Allais wears a little less well. His nearest anglophone equivalent is probably Stephen Leacock, which may explain why. One of his French admirers, Claude Soalhat, warns readers against comparing him with Mark Twain or O. Henry, but sets him in "la tradition du *nonsense* britannique": in other words, he faces competition. "The French", says Mr Kington, "have a far greater mistrust of humour than we do . . . to be a *humoriste* is too frivolous, too uncommitted, even too unliterary. It is not, in a word, French."

This, surely, is to fall back into the trap of national stereotypes. If it were true, Daninos would hardly have sold a million-and-a-half copies of *Les Carnets du major Thompson*. What is true, I suspect, is that Allais provides a rare native specimen of the genuinely *loufoque* "crazy" humour which most Frenchmen associate with Britain and America, with Lewis Carroll, the Marx Brothers, and *Hellzapoppin*. Scratchy copies of the latter films are almost always to be found in some Paris fleapit, opening a riotous escape from the realism and strictness of French life. Humour? Or wit? The genre escapes classification: what remains certain is that France has never produced a *Goon Show*: but the Goons' visual equivalents, breaking the sound-barrier of language, have a very deep appeal.

In French, Allais touches the same chord—the secret love of anarchy in us all. As life grows more complex and the sober demands of society grow more pressing everywhere, both wit and humour may be giving way to something more subversive, less poised than the one, less complaisant than the other. May 1968 in Paris was perhaps the high point of "black" or "crazy" humour—"l'imagination au pouvoir". In this sense, both, Allais and *Monty Python* may be sublimated *événements*, non-violent catharsis for modern urban man. In this respect, as in others, the Channel grows narrower every day.

Spellbound

RICHARD CAVENDISH:
A History of Magic
180pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £4.95.

In writing this exciting history of occult aberrations, Richard Cavendish can claim to have captured the very spirit of magic. Well-versed in necromancy, in reading character from moles, and in unveiling the future from the quivering entrails of a human sacrifice, he provides the reader with a comprehensive catalogue of texts on the infinite variety of magic, together with thumbnail sketches of their colourful authors, from Zoroaster to Aleister Crowley.

A robust scepticism marks Mr Cavendish's views on runes, Druids, demons, love potions, Satanism, and the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. And he entertains no small measure of doubt as to the efficacy of relics such as "a feather from the wing of the angel Gabriel; a jar full of the darkness inflicted on Egypt by Moses; rays from the Star of Bethlehem; samples of the Virgin's milk; and a whole wardrobe of her chemises". Yet he seems persuaded that some traditional claims are "founded on fact: the claim to observe far beyond sight, to have direct access to other people's minds, to see into the future, and even to exert mental influence on matter".

A History of Magic therefore comes in the very nick of time. For the last quarter of the twentieth century will be known to posterity as the Age of Magic. By magic does the pound levitate and sink. By magic does the balance of payments fluctuate, by magic are Honours Lists compiled, and by magic do huge industries grind to a halt. This being so, there is everything to be said for reviving the venerable custom whereby every ruler and Minister, before deciding what action to take consulted his astrologer, pythoness or interpreter of dreams. Only in this way will magic find its fulfilment, as Mr Cavendish insists, in the restoration of "the 'universal man' to his lost throne".

John Cohen

The freshness of the text

By George P. Elliott

ANTHONY HECHT :
Millions of Strange Shadows
96pp. Oxford University Press. Paperback, £2.50.

"Gladness of the Best" is the title of the richest of the poems in Anthony Hecht's third collection, *Millions of Strange Shadows*, and what he does with the phrase illuminates his handling of language. Because he puts the phrase in quotation marks, you know it is not his, but because he does not say where the phrase comes from, you feel it is integral to his poem. This doubleness functions whether or not you identify the poet who first put those words together or the poem in which he did it. That is to say, Hecht's voice is his own, but his language, more amply than that of any other living poet writing in English, derives from, adds to, is part of the great tradition.

Formerly, this would scarcely have been worth remarking on at any length. But in this age many poets, including some important ones, turn their backs on high culture, vandalize the past, see in history "me" and "now", fracture or flatten language, find sublimity, if anywhere, only in the darkest depths. Moreover, it is not just Hecht's way of using phrases from other poets which is out of fashion; the plain prose meaning of "gladness of the best" expresses an attitude which currently is suspect too—so suspect, indeed, that to use the phrase as he does might be seen as a flouting, a political act à la Pound. Hecht speaks scathingly (in "A Lot of Night Music") of poets who

laugh and rejoice
At liberation from the bonds of gender,
Race, morals and mind,
As well as meter, rhyme and the human voice.

However, if there is a trace of the political here, it is so faint that it can be ignored, for what matters immeasurably to this poet is the passionate need to praise and, in the old high sense, to communicate.

This would seem to be an age when the double-negative, as it were, supersedes the positive, in a kind of secular Calvinism which makes us far more confident when fighting and fleeing the bad than when seeking and defending the good. Hatred of inequality, fear of totalitarianism—surely in the world at large these are more potent emotions now than any aspiration or affirmation one could name, either political or religious. Philip Larkin in his double-negative verse bitterly complains of the loss of old high goods, and his bleak elegance and exact intelligence surely merit the esteem in which his poems are held. Hecht does the positive thing, no less elegantly, no less intelligently. In effect he says : "Not all the glory has been lost beyond recovery to ruin and museums. Much of it is still alive in the world, some of it in the English language itself. Let me show you." And he shows us.

Sometimes he looks at a part of the workaday world and speaks in an almost casual manner, more casually than in his earlier poems. In the course of "Apprehensions", he recounts looking out of the window as a child, from a sixth-floor apartment in New York City on Lexington Avenue, in the altered light of an approaching storm.
And all of this made me superbly happy.
But most of all a yellow Checker Cab
Parked at the corner. Something in the light
Was making this the yellowest thing on earth.
It was as if Adam, having completed
Naming the animals, had started
On colors and had found his primer
Here, in a taxi cab, on Eighty-ninth Street.
It was absolute, parental yellow.

In "Going Home to Teaspoons" something of that class language and voice and speaks nostalgia and joy of that sweet visionary's gaze, counting his journey home from an asylum, footsore penniless, from Bethlehem, finding that Hecht [illegible] lonely experience in [illegible] of false im-

own experience, not in the voice of a damned soul gloating in the pit of his torment and wishing to pull you in with him, but in the voice of a confused, homely sufferer who aspires to escape torment and deprivation and to rejoice as best he can over the beautiful, graceful things he happens on in the world and especially over that Mary Joyce who was Clare's Beatrice, his Dulcinea, his imagined wife.

Sometimes Hecht, as he has done from his earliest poems, still employs the full panoply of cultural and poetic opulence. "Somebody's Life" opens with a sumptuousness of sound and movement which has scarcely been heard since Dylan Thomas, though neither here nor anywhere else is Hecht as difficult to parse as Thomas often is.

Cliff-high, sunlit, in the tawny warmth of youth,
He gazed down at the breakneck rocks below.

In the breakers' "flung tiaras, Full, hoisted, momentary chandeliers," he saw "the lofty figures of his soul".

Was this the secret
Gaudery of self-love, or a blood-bidden,
Involuntary homage to the world?
As it happens, he was doomed never to know.

With this unresolved question, Hecht holds the poem, which has threatened to run away in an excess of ornateness, on a taut rein and so dares to finish it gorgeously:

But to the very finish he remembered
The flash and force, the crests, the heraldry,
Those castual epergnes towering up
Like Easter trinkets of the tzar-evitch.

One measure of Hecht's maturing as a poet is in his skill at handling the ornaments of poetry. His youthful verse, in *A Summoning of Stones*, fed off poetry, skilfully and even handsomely, far more than off experience or felt thought. In a witty poem in the present collection, "The Ghost in the Martini", the twenty-year-old Hecht, vain, self-pitying, and poetical, speaks out of martini glass to the middle-aged Hecht:

"I have sat alone in the dark,
accomplishing little,
And worth no more to myself, in pride and foe
Than a cup of luke-warm spittle.
But honest about it, withal. . ."

To which the grey-haired poet responds : "'Withal,' forsooth!"

The Hard Hours in 1967 was vastly stronger and contained a few poems of the highest accomplishment; but there were still some poetical baubles in it. None of this is in the poetry any longer, for several reasons. One of these reasons surely is a matter of record. In 1973, in collaboration with the scholar Helen Bacon, Hecht published a translation of *Seven Against Thebes* which makes it possible for a reader who knows English but not Greek to understand how Kitto could have put this tragedy along with *King Oedipus* in that realm of the best where there is no further ranking. Immersion in that poem surely strengthened Hecht, the incense immediacy of its prayers and imprecations jarring out of his vocabulary the last archaicisms, the last thou-thy-thee. For him, such translating is not a sort of vamping around waiting for the lightning to strike. He is now immersing himself in *Oedipus at Kolonos*, as all who read poetry should be glad to hear. In "Dichtung und Wahrheit", he says:

It is, in the end, the solitary scholar
Who returns us to the freshness of the text,
Which returns to us the freshness of the world
In which we find ourselves, like replicas,
Dazzled by glittering dawns, upon a stage.

At the end of "The Feast of Stephen" Hecht brings an event of great historical importance, the stoning of St Stephen with Saul looking on consentingly, into the vivid present and ennobles the painful scene by dwelling on the beauty of the gleaming bodies of the young killers,

. . . these superbly tanned
Figures with a swimmer's chest and shoulders,
A miler's thighs, with their self-conscious grace,
. . . their sleek, conversing bodies,
Brilliantly oiled and burnished by the sun.

This poem does again with the event, in words, something analogous to what Renaissance painting once did with such events in paint.

In "A Birthday Poem" he ranges from the ordinary through the sumptuous to the exalted, with an ease and amplitude he has achieved only once or twice before, most notably in "Behold the Lilies of the Field" in *The Hard Hours*. In this love poem in the one when he addressed as "O my most dear" we may see how he keeps an intimate emotion from turning into an instrument of the ego. The poem begins with the poet present only as the maker of an associative meditation: a swarm of midges in the summer moon, moving to Mantegna and Holbein, then to time and history. Then, in the first line of the eighth of the twelve stanzas, the poem "shifts the gears of tense", and in the last line of the stanza "I" appears "I" the man Anthony Hecht. It looks at a snapshot of his below taken when she was four years old in which she is wearing a new pair of red sneakers, a birthday present.

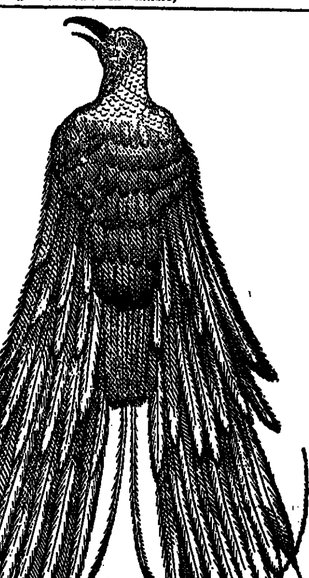
You are looking down at them with a smile
Of pride and admiration, half Wonder and half joy.

That is, the poem has chosen an image of his beloved in which she is in the posture of unchild. And he gives us his own reaction to this in another poet's words:

The picture is black and white, metal light and shade.
Even the sneakers' red
Has washed away in acids. A voice is spent,
Echoing down the ages in my head:
What is your substance, whereof are you made,
That millions of strange shadow on you tend?

His wonder is at once his and woman's, and Hecht makes Shakespeare's words his own by the new context: before photography "tend" here could mean only "attend"; now it also suggests "converge".

At a moment of intense personal feeling, the poet, with the rhetoric of courtesy, imagines himself other. Then, at the beginning of the last stanza, the poem moves into the immediate present of its being written. "I know the live imprint of that smile of gratitude." And in the last line ("O that I may be worthy of that look") he finds himself in the homely posture to which exaltation brings us all, on our knees of his spirit. "Gladness of the Best" is from Herbert's sonnet "Prayer".



Bird of paradise, a woodcut from Francisco Hernandez's natural history of the New World, originally published in Mexico in 1615. From catalogue 969 of Bernard Quaritch, 5-8 Lower John Street, Golden Square, London W1R 4AU.

Corrected vision

By D. M. Thomas

BRIAN PATTEN :
Vanishing Trick
46pp. Allen and Unwin. Paperback, £1.25.

ROBERT NYE :
Divisions on a Ground
45pp. Manchester : Carcanet New Press. £2.

JAMES SIMMONS :
Judy Garland and the Cold War
59pp. Belfast : Blackstaff Press. Paperback, £1.75.

Brian Patten's new collection, *Vanishing Trick*, confirms that he has overcome the dangers of early success in the Liverpool scene of the late 1960s. Perhaps wisely, he soon veered away from that odd and short-lived "centre of the human universe", as Alan Ginsberg described it; he moved to London, and—increasingly—to the place where the true poem is made, one's own private being. *Vanishing Trick* is a truthful, and tender, sequence of love poems, or poems of the death of love; but it is also about the drive into oneself, that painful, lonely experience in which we are compelled to face images of oneself created by other people.

The poems write in a very assured way about being diffident and vulnerable. The narcissism and sentimental anarchism of the centre of the human universe has been purged. An occasional too-easy line, such as "And Nothing Is Ever As Perfect As You Want It To Be" (title and refrain) strikes a dated note; but much more often one is impressed by a kind of writing that is at once innocent and experienced, the tone heard so often in Russian poetry : "It is absurd not knowing where to go", "I cannot speak clearly about you"; "I am ill simply through wanting her"; or the gentle clarity of:

Sleepy, you had nothing to tell me.
Yet in such moments was no song sung
Nor sound nor laugh nor anything so pure
As the silence with which you presented me.

Robert Nye's *Divisions on a Ground* is slimmer even than it looks; since many of the pages contain short poems. Not that this would matter, if the poems resonated. On the whole they do not. They are intelligent and polished, but something fails to clinch them. In "All Hallows" it is a sophisticated late line, burying the simple, eloquent sadness of what has come before :

Once as a children saw the willows
Across the river at All Hallows,
Each one distinct although six miles away.

What brought them close and brings them now again
Sharp to the mind's eye like an icon of it?

An orthodox theology of tears.

Mr Nye is successful at undercuting reality with surrealistic sinuosphere, as in the urbanely sinister "Henry James", and a poem whose intercalated worlds are implied by the title, "Travelling to my Second Marriage on the Day of the First Moonshot". I enjoy too the genial "Reading Robert Southey to my Daughter" ("O sweet O prolific O mediocre R/O ramblingly gallant and unimportant S"). But when the poems try to express the real tangible world, they do not—as Emily Dickinson would say—"breathe". There seems too little pressure generated by the theme; we are less aware of what is being said than of the way the poem is saying it.

If Mr Nye's book strikes one as a dry sherry, James Simmons's *Judy Garland and the Cold War* is a quart of Guinness. Almost all the poems are about other poets, dead and alive, English and Irish. He is stern about the stern ones (the religious Donne and Eliot, whom he calls by his second name, Stearns), and genial about the genial ones. The style is cool, colloquial, vigorous. It makes for a lively book. But where he strikes out at much finer poets than himself the blows rebound embarrassingly. You may get away with accusing the Donne of "Batter my heart, three person'd God" of thinness in texture only if your own verse is richer than this:

When you lost touch with lovers' bare flesh,
how could the textures not suffer
in your verse. The real blood thins
fleas sucked
that sang through your and her veins when you fucked
was lost for God's magic burgundy drops.

And while Mr Simmons's response to *The Waste Land* contains skilled portraits of some likeable people from his earlier years in London, this long poem, "No Land Is Waste", is damaged by its aggressive air of "correcting" Eliot's vision.

Elsewhere, Mr Simmons's frequent passages of parody are not quite witty enough. There are good poems about a few unnamed poets and also about Judy Garland and Fanny Hill, where something real is being said, skilfully and vividly, about the human condition. The rare breaks from the mirrorrifts of poets work best: for example, the droll humour of "Buchanan's Fancy", where body-searches in Belfast are seen as sought-after sexual thrillings. Here, an echo of Donne works well as a climax, as to speak: "Do you license/their roving hands? I do."

The period Paris of René Clair

By Richard Cobb

Historians and examiners, for professional or educational reasons, will favour one set of great divides : private individuals, when concerned with the remembered past, will opt for a variety of others, depending on age, experience, and national origin. For myself, recalled French history will fall into two quite distinct periods, with a gap in the middle : 1935 to 1939, and 1944 to 1958. During the "years between" I was absent from France ; and, after 1958, as far as I was concerned, nothing could ever be quite the same again. I have returned frequently to France since then, but more and more as an observer, who was beginning to lose his way in unfamiliar territory, and who was no longer able to read the new signposts or even always to understand the new language. I know few French people under thirty-five ; and those I do know are the children or grandchildren of friends. Nor am I by any means alone in dating the transformation of Paris, from what it was, to what, unhappily, it now is, from 1958.

In my personal textbook of contemporary French history, the opening year would be 1935, for that was when I first went to Paris ; but I do not think it has any other significance. The real dividing line, for the later history of the Third Republic, would be 1934. There is no need to introduce the political importance of 6 and 12 *février* ; but the great divide is provided by the *affaire Stavisky*.

It is not just a matter of public history ; it is also the gap between a Republic that was still curiously light-hearted, even in its amiable cynicism and humorous, but shameless self-examination, and a Republic that was becoming sombre, divisive and increasingly frightened. M Alexandre belongs to the sunnier side of that gap ; and his mysterious death in Chamonix is the end of something more then the fantastic life of a generous, pleasure-loving, fashionable Russian adventurer. There was a *style Stavisky* which was also that of a period.

Put in another way, it might be said that I had come in at the tail-end of the last great period of French *insouciance*. The death of Serge-Alexandre was like the untimely and quite unsuitable end to a party. I was in time for the overlap : the mystery surrounding the death of the *conseiller* Prince, his body discovered on the line from Paris to Lyon, at the evocative la Combe-aux-Pécs. Another event of the previous year, the assassination of Alexander of Yugoslavia and Louis Barthou, had much less impact in Paris ; what most people seem to have retained from it was that it had happened in Marseille, and on the Canebière to boot. An almost loving indulgence in the ever-widening ripples of the *affaire Stavisky* seemed to represent a lingering, sentimental attachment to a period of relative optimism, as well as to the desire to exclude anything from outside that might jar a comforting sense of continuity. Even *le Canard* was both more light-hearted and much more amusing in 1935 than it would be in the following four years. The departure of Jean Galtier-Boissière may have had something to do with this change of tone.

Of course, much of the *insouciance* was mere affectation. The first half of the 1930s were years of bitter social conflict and often brutal police repression. Nevertheless, 1934 *does* seem a watershed. There was nothing frivolous about 1936, 1937, *l'année Expo*, did indeed have hints of a partial return to fantasy. Much of the fantasy was provided by the Exhibition itself, particularly by the twin spectacle offered by the German and Soviet pavilions, as they faced one another, over a narrow channel, in competing ugliness. But a direct outcome of the *Expo* was the *affaire Weidmann*, a one-man, artisanal, precursor of the massacres to come. Weidmann murdered only half-a-dozen people or so, nearly all of whom he had met—for they were a disparate lot : a taxi-driver, a seedy commercial traveller, a *demi-mondaine*, an American ballet-dancer—while acting as guide at the German pavilion. When the young German was finally arrested at the famous villa—*faux manoir normand*—in la Celle-Saint-Cloud the house was found to contain all the clothing, hand-bags, shoes, luggage, jewelry and so on of the unglamorous victims : even the red and black G7 taxi, with an R number-plate, was in the garage. The *affaire*, as it gradually unwound, was rightly seen as an unscheduled prolongation of the *Expo* ; and many people at the time consoled themselves with the hope that *tant que durera l'Expo, il n'y aura pas de guerre*. It was a pity that it could not have been carried over into the following year ; but this Weidmann, right up to the time of his public execution in Versailles, succeeded in doing. With Weidmann gone, there was the chaos of the mobilization of 1938 and the ugly panic of the Parisian well-to-do.

* * *

In their portrayals of Paris and its inhabitants, René Clair and Georges Simenon stand on different sides of the 1934 divide, the *cindaste* on the sunny one, the Belgian writer on one almost wholly sombre. But it is not just a matter of chronology ; Maigret had made his first appearance in 1929 ; but he seems almost to have gone out of business in the second half of the 1930s ; and unlike Quenoau's Valentin, he even missed the opportunity of taking a look at *l'Expo*, perhaps because his creator was inside it, as an exhibit. The difference is both in temperament and in the choice of an observatory. Clair is always light-hearted, tender, sentimental, full of fun, wonderfully inventive, and wholly optimistic ; he is also in a hurry, and his characters have to move very fast ; there is not time for philosophizing. They are also always redeemable, even bank managers, industrialists and politicians, even *immortels* ; and bearded senators may all at once be taken with the itch to sing and dance. There is always a way out : prison, or the open road ; suicide may be contemplated, even attempted, but a girl in a short black velvet dress, a *bandeau* and enormous made-up eyes will arrive just in time. It will end in song ; even *concierges* and villainous-looking *surineurs* will join in. Taxi-drivers are light-hearted poets of the night, even the *agents*, buttoned to the neck, like presidential chauffeurs, eternally waving their hands outwards to the cameras, at the assassination of Doumer or at that of Alexander, even *agents* are *bon-enfant*. Nothing could be farther removed from the self-searching, the sense of guilt and failure that seem to dog most of Simenon's people.

For the urban decor, there are five constant favoured components : the attic with a sky-light, offering easy access to the roof, the chaotic, jagged geography of roof-top Paris, chimneys and stove-pipes, chasms and drops, the staircase climbing to the seventh floor, the café, blazing with lights, open all night, and the dark street, its *pavé* gleaming liquidly like dark treacle. Clair is *the* poet of the Paris night : a bluish sensuous night of dark velvet, carrying a whiff of powder and the promise of adventure, indeed, a perfectly convincing evocation of the Parisian night of the 1930s, at which *le père la Tulipe* and *Jojo le Terreur* might encounter, at the bar, *le noceur*, in white tie, a runaway accountant, or a love-sick *monsieur décoré*, not a flight of fantasy, but an accurate representation of a limitless sociability that did exist, especially between midnight and four in the morning, in the 1930s, and that even partially revived in the 1940s.

Nor is the *chambre de bonne* or the studio beneath the roof an object of poetical creation. In the 1930s, as they had been ever since 1914, rents were so low that the poor artist or the *grisette* could indeed live sparsely *sous les toits*, especially in a central *arrondissement*. And the *pneumatique* does arrive within two hours, the post is delivered on Sundays, the newspaper *does* come out on Sunday (but not on Monday), taxi drivers *do* wear peaked caps, *mauvais garçons* do wear checked ones and black and white shoes, *soutiens-gorge* do wear stocks, artists and *instituteurs do* wear *lavallières*, and Parisians of both sexes *are* more likely to be dark than fair, so that their eyes will dilate in the light and dark of the city night, their brilliantined hair will glisten under the white lights. It is still best to keep away from the *Zone* at night. Nor is the Bastille yet entirely safe ; and the rue de Lappe could still provide unpleasant surprises in 1930. The accordion and the *appareils à sous* still hold their own. Clair's villains, decked out in conventional *mauvais garçon* rig, all appear to be French ; indeed, they readily talk Parisian, like everyone else, including the elderly *boulevardier* or the *aristo en rupture de ban*. Perhaps we are indeed still a little ahead of the Corsicans, well ahead of the Tunisians ; the Yugoslavs have not even been thought of.

There are students ; but they are in the conventional Murger tradition : artistic, but unrecognized, torn between two girls, or sharing a girl with their best friend. They live on the top, in conventional fear of the *concierge*, who, when things are really bad, proves indulgent and even generous. Professional people are professionally dressed : hard collars, dark hats, black overcoats, spats. The PJ wear long belted macs and grey hats with dark bands ; elderly and sweet-natured *poivrotes* wear black straw hats with artificial violets ; *bistrotiers* are moustached, and wear caps and aprons, they have curly dark hair, a variety of trades still sport peaked caps. All the men, and most of the younger women are constantly lighting up—an action that illuminates their faces in the dark—and then have cigarettes hanging from the bottom lip while they talk. Small boys wear smocks and berets. Fringe characters—their identity and occupation not at once revealed—will wear berets too ; in Clair, the beret gives nothing away, and it is of the modest variety, not the fascist floppy kind. There are more berets about in Clair than in the second half of the 1930s, far more again than in the 1940s. Indeed it might be argued that the death of the beret coincides with that of a Paris of human proportions.

For the abiding attraction of René Clair is not merely a matter of nostalgia, though there must always be plenty of that, because he is a period piece. He evokes the easy, unsuspecting sociability of a city the inhabitants of which share a common slang and most basic assumptions, and enjoy a wide area of mutual encounter : the café, the street, the market, the staircase, the shop. No one is especially afraid of anyone else ; and nearly all can converse in an imaginative and briefly expressed irreverence. The common ideology is scepticism, softened by friendship, understanding and habit. There is also plenty of love, spring-like and unashamed, infectious and encouraged. The function of the newspaper is to carry *petites annonces* and the *chronique judiciaire*, as well as news of Longchamp and Vincennes, to furnish a covering to the floor during house-painting (and a friendly *peintre en bâtiment*, wearing a newspaper in the manner of the Carpenter, will help out, in return for some other service) and to envelop meat and vegetables. The function of the *haute personnagée* is to be ridiculous ; but if they step down from their plinth, they will be forgiven. Urban society is geared to the modest aspirations of routine and habit of individuals and individualists ; the enemy is loneliness, and the remedy is companionability and verbal exchange. French is for speaking. Everyone is really all right, if approached in the right way. The burglar has his job to carry on just like anyone else, the counterfeiter is an artist who has retained an artist's pride in the quality of his production, even the *gigolo* is perhaps more comical than cruel.

It is, of course, also *le monde à l'envers* ; for, in Clair, there is nearly always more satisfaction in coming down than in going up. The room is only at the top physically and there is a sort of release in the gambler cleared out, in the cashier who has gone off with the cash, in the banker who has taken to the quays or the Halles, in the industrialist who has bedded for the open road. The only allowable success is in love ; and if, you do win the lottery, you give it all away, remembering all your friends and neighbours, organizing a splendid repast, champagne, *vins de choix*, in which all, even the *agent* and the *entrepreneur des pompes funèbres*, will readily join in.

Join in what ? A celebration, even a way of life aimed at the satisfaction of simple enjoyment, conversation, food and drink, the spring, sunshine, and of course, the cadre, the *only* cadre for personal and collective fulfilment, PARIS. Clair's Paris no doubt sometimes *sent le carton-pâte*, quite a number of his streets look as if they had been put up in Epinay (they had), the roofs and shop-fronts especially often seem overdone. Yet they *are* recognizable. Of course Clair is an artist and an urban poet, of course his films are delightfully light-hearted fantasies. But there is much more to him than that. He is as convincing a witness of place and period as Carco or MacOrlan. But, surely, it will be objected, people cannot all have been so *nice* ? Well, I think, on the whole, they *were*. We are now a very long way from the 1930s. Clair's attics are now converted into studio apartments for university teachers, antiquo-dealers (who never feature in Clair's films, in which we only encounter modest and picturesque *brocanteurs*), technocrats, *énergues*, the staircase has been deadened by carpeting, the doors do not open readily and are protected by electrical alarm devices, even the *concierge* has been disposed of. Many of the shops have gone, most of the cafés have been replaced by bars.

Paris by night is no longer a reality lived by its inhabitants, no longer a place for the lonely, in which they may feel drawn by the inviting blaze of a café ; it has been reduced to a jaded round of tourist night spots. Much of the city is dead at night ; some of it is dangerous as well. Clair's characters have mostly been expelled from the city, following the unfreezing of rents, the destruction of the Halles and of enormous areas of the IVme, to Rungis and elsewhere, taking with them a friendliness and a ready irreverence now only available in daytime, and already running out on the *métro-express* in the early evenings. It is no longer a place where people of all conditions may meet regularly, informally, in the endless excitement of the chance encounter. Where would they meet ? There is no longer any common ground, and much of the old centre has become a single-class stronghold, shuttered, selfish, uninviting. Those cafés that have not become bars, have been converted into branch offices of banks. The long yellow-lit windows of Clair's films, silhouetting a young man in shirt sleeves or a young woman in a summer dress, no longer have anyone leaning out to take in the street, for there is nothing to take in, just a dark trench, between rows of silent cars parked on the pavement ; and the yellow light has been replaced by a discreet table-lamp, *la lumière tamisée*, the shouts across the street have given way to the filtered sound of elaborate record-players. Paris has largely lost its human dimensions ; René Clair's Paris really *did* exist ; but it doesn't any more.

Leisure being a luxury item it was, until this century, enjoyed almost exclusively by the rich. But not quite. Then, as now, it was roughly divided into two categories : participatory and spectator. The first group covered various forms of hunting and field games—a murderous form of football, cricket, tennis and other vociferizable sports ; the second included numerous varieties of man and animal-baiting climaxed by public execution, and then the theatre. In those days the *jeux* really were *sans frontières*.

John Armitage's *Man at Play : Nine Centuries of Pleasure Making* (192pp. Frederick Warne. £4.95), is entertaining, well-researched and copiously illustrated, and would make an excellent basis for a Galbraithian television treatment, starting with scores of tiny cardboard rich men jerking about jousting or hunting and thousands of tiny cardboard poor men forced to practise archery or peking their miserable fellows in the stocks. And it might end with our cardboard contemporaries duffing each other up at a football match.

Sarah Goad

Hitler's unwanted helpers

By Patrick McCarthy

PASCAL ORY :
Les collaborateurs 1940-1945
316pp. Paris : Seuil. 55fr.

Pascal Ory seems almost apologetic at the start of Les collaborateurs 1940-1945: yet another book about the Frenchmen who supported the Nazis. In recent years France has been deluged with books and films on this subject. Many have been written by men who are too young to remember the war—significantly M Ory was born in 1948—and who are reacting against the idealized, Resistance version imposed on them in their childhood. Although they are frequently accused of being sympathetic to fascism or of being nostalgic for jackboted virility, they are usually, like M Ory, mercilessly objective.

Les collaborateurs deals with the Paris collaborators who rejected Vichy as too conservative and wanted to create a French fascism: a strong leader, a one-party state, exaltation of the Aryan race, a corporate economy, Germany as the model. The first question is: how important were they? M Ory is obliged to admit that they had little influence. Although the German ambassador Abetz revelled in the "tout Paris" of the Occupation, Hitler had no use for the French fascists. Their revitalized France was supposed to play a role alongside Germany in the new Europe, but Hitler was determined that the traditional enemy should play no role at all.

The collaborators tried to win favour by offering to enter the war on Germany's side, but Hitler already had one unreliable ally, Italy, and he did not want another. Moreover the collaborators had little popular support. Most Frenchmen rallied around Pétain in 1940 and remained loyal until 1943; as the war turned against Germany they started to look towards de Gaulle. They lived unpleasantly ambiguous lives: but they had no taste for fascist revolutions.

The collaborators' adventure was hopeless from the outset and Déat's endless intrigues were scarcely more real than Alphonse de Châteaubriand's Wagnerian fantasies. But M Ory chronicles the various factions carefully, delves into his characters' backgrounds and also includes an excellent index. Of the leaders, the most interesting is Jacques Doriot. A former steelworker, Doriot was a founder member of the Communist Party and the parliamentary representative for the red bastion of Saint-Denis. In the early 1930s, when the party was following Stalin's dictum of no alliances, Doriot dissented and demanded cooperation with the Socialists. He quarrelled with Thorez and was expelled from the party, which then adopted his policy and moved towards the Popular Front. At the present moment, when the French Communists are once again in an alliance with the Socialists, Doriot's nationalistic brand of communism might deserve another look from historians.

In 1936, after a rapid shift to the right, he founded the fascist Parti Populaire Français and in 1939 he took a pacifist stance. Energetic and a rousing orator, Doriot seemed likely to become a French Führer. Yet he was reduced to impotent rhetoric by the lack of Nazi support. He thought at least twice about a putsch but each time the Germans held him back.

A curious movement which M Ory describes is Breton separatism. The Breton leader Olier Mordrel, who had during the 1930s backed the anti-French terrorists of Gwenn ha Du (White and Black), turned to the Germans for support. An admirer of Roger Casement, he came back to Brittany with the Nazi armies and tried to set up an independent Breton state. He had also picked up the Nazi theory of the master race which he applied to the Celts. No longer were Bretons to marry degenerate Latins; they must interbreed only with their equals, the Germans. On his way to Brittany Mordrel conferred with Frank Ryan, the IRA leader who had fought for the Republicans in Spain. The Nazis had pulled Ryan out of Franco's jails and were sending him back to start a rebellion in Northern Ireland. But neither Mordrel nor Ryan was successful. Mordrel found scant support in Brittany—the Celts are clearly not cut out to be a master race—and in 1944 he left with the retreating Nazis.

The main criticism to be made of M Ory's well-researched book is that he does not devote enough space to the broader implications of Paris collaboration. He does suggest that it is important not for its political impact but as one manifestation of the chaos of French society in the 1930s and 1940s. Brasillach, the wild, bookish student, become the virulent pamphleteer who denounces his enemies to the Gestapo? The answer must be that he reflects a deeper violence, stemming from an economy that cannot cope with the Depression, a lower middle class that feels itself threatened, an intelligentsia that has given way to nihilism. This climate made possible not just the fascist movements but also Vichy's own brand of collaboration and the Nazi round-ups of French Jews. It is disappointing too that M Ory has only a few thin pages on economic collaboration, which is still a taboo subject in France. The only good book written on it is by an Englishman, Alan Milward (*The New Order and the French Economy*, 1970), and he had to rely chiefly on German sources.

French businessmen, especially in the important iron-ore and bauxite industries, were eager to cooperate with the Nazis. Vichy set up committees to supervise exports to Germany, and it tried to set prices high in order to offset the enormous Occupation costs. But the impatient producers preferred to deal directly with the Germans and to accept lower prices in order to ensure steady profits for themselves. Vichy's own efforts to collaborate culminated in the 1943 meetings between Speer and Jean Bichelonne, minister of trade and industry. Bichelonne, a technocrat, wanted the French government to plan its industry and then to work closely with German planners. The rapid Allied advance put an end to these hopes but, if economic collaboration is still a touchy topic in France, it is probably because both Bichelonne's ideas and the civil servants and businessmen who worked on them survived the war to re-emerge in the early 1950s when Franco-German cooperation was resumed. At all events this complicated question should surely be tackled by France's young, revisionist historians.

A dubious independence

By John Cruickshank

HENRY DE MONTHERLANT :
L'Equinoxe de septembre. Le Solstice de juin. Mémoire.
319pp. Paris : Gallimard. 45fr.

Immediately after the Liberation the French Comité National des Ecrivains published a list of writers who, it claimed, had betrayed their country. The list included Montherlant and the case against him was chiefly based on L'Equinoxe de Septembre and Le Solstice de juin, published in 1938 and 1941 respectively. These two works have not always been easily available since and it is convenient to have them published together now, accompanied by a Mémoire which Montherlant wrote in 1948 and some brief comments of 1945 by Léon Pierre-Quint (himself a member of the CNE).

Throughout his life Montherlant possessed in strong measure the instincts and characteristics of an individualist. He was a natural nonconformist who could be biting in his attacks on what he conceived to be sheeplike, collectivist attitudes. He was impatient with those with whom he disagreed and, if violent, he disapproved, and took no pains to disguise, often the reasons for his anger. Above all, as a man of letters, he remained aloof from cliques and coteries in a country where membership of artistic groups is the literary way of life. As a result, despite his immense achievement as a writer and the fact that he was widely regarded as a major dramatist and novelist, he was viewed with suspicion, or frankly disliked, by a considerable number of his fellow professionals. This is, of course, a potentially dangerous situation at a time of national crisis. It is hardly surprising that resentment against Montherlant increased in certain quarters during the Occupation and Resistance.

This consequence of Montherlant's sometimes acid independence was increased by several features of both *L'Equinoxe* and *Le Solstice*. He made it clear, for example, that he was a fundamentally non-political writer. He regarded it as the duty of the writer, the *clerc*, to concern himself with what is enduring and universal, not with what is contingent and immediate. Such an attitude has a long and distinguished artistic genealogy, yet it can obviously be interpreted as a dereliction of duty in times of war or disaster.

In these books and elsewhere Montherlant also displayed a detached attitude to war which gave rise to much misunderstanding in the previously unpublished *Mémoire* included in the present volume he writes: "La guerre est comme une compétition sportive. Elle n'implique l'hostilité que durant le temps de la partie. La défaite doit être acceptée 'sportivement'." It is difficult to accept this analogy and one can see how Montherlant laid himself open to severe criticism as well as to wide misunderstanding. Characteristically, he invoked the battles of the ancient Greek cosmogonies and the code of the Japanese samurai, but the attitudes associated with heroic epics must be irrelevant to the facts of industrialized, technological warfare or Nazi genocide.

Finally, both books contain unfortunate examples of Montherlant's tendency to project on to contemporary events mythic and symbolic significance. It was at best foolish and naive, in 1941, to see the German swastika as a derivative of the solar symbol of ancient Mithraic religion and to appear to suggest that the *Blitzkrieg* could be interpreted as a happy reversal of the victory of Constantine over Maxentius which established the Christian Church in the Roman Empire. Jean-Louis Curtis was right to speak of "the type of disaster by which estimates the pages of *Le Solstice de juin*" and to characterize it as "repellent". But he was no doubt also justified in adding: "It would be stupid to interpret this lyrical journal as being at bottom the clear expression of an effective system of political thought." Nevertheless in the heated atmosphere of 1944-45 just such a charge was brought against Montherlant by the CNE—though it should also be said that he was exonerated of all forms of guilt by both the French intelligence services and the Société des Gens de Lettres.

In the *Mémoire* Montherlant emphasizes the fact that he belonged to no political group during the Occupation, that he refused to attend a Writers' Congress in Weimar, to write for the *Pariser Zeitung*, to autograph copies of his books in a pro-German Parisian bookshop, etc. To many, of course, and particularly to those who risked their lives in the Resistance, not to take sides was, at best, to fail to take the *right* side. Indeed, it is difficult not to see something slightly undignified and demeaning about Montherlant's self-defence published here. Of course he is right to point to his anti-appeasement views in *L'Equinoxe*, to emphasize his criticism of Vichy in *Le Solstice*, to insist that his severity towards France was itself a form of patriotism. But in all these matters there is an element of ambiguity which is no less disturbing because it arises more from aesthetic than from moral considerations. No doubt Montherlant's detractors, as well as his admirers, will welcome the opportunity provided by this volume of assessing his self-defence in the light of the essays, to which he makes frequent reference, collected in *L'Equinoxe de Septembre* and *Le Solstice de juin*.

NOTRE CHEMIN DE CROIX

December 1940, and Joan of Arc is burnt for a second time by the intransigent English. This anti-British poster is reproduced in La France allemande, *"Paroles du collaborationisme français 1933-1945", a new volume in the consistently good Collection Archives published by Gallimard and Julliard (274pp. 16.40 fr). The documents have been chosen and glossed by Pascal Ory, author of the book reviewed on this page.*

The octogenarian trout

By Martin Turnell

MARCEL JOUHANDEAU :
Une gifle de bonheur
Journaliers XXIV : août 1969-octobre 1970
172pp. Paris : Gallimard. 29fr.

The latest volume of "Journaliers" provides the usual entertaining reading and is full of amusing reflections about life. The title shows that for this particular period this was better than usual for Marc Jouhandeau. The most important single event is the change in his position. It will be remembered that he is the illegitimate son of a Jouhandeau's adopted daughter Céline. When Marc was abandoned after her marriage and her husband's brutal treatment of him, he became the adopted son of Céline's sister Monique, but official permission was given for him to be known and brought up by the Jouhandeaus. Owing apparently to the persuasiveness of M Jouhandeau's wife Monique agrees to a change and the Jouhandeaus are allowed to adopt Marc over completely as the adopted son. "Eh bien!", writes M Jouhandeau joyfully, "C'est fait. Nous avons un fils." Marc's comment turns out to be startling. With Céline's brutal husband in mind, he declares: "En effet, monsieur, j'ai enfin le bonheur de ne plus porter le nom de mon assassin." "Ce mot terrifiant, prononcé par un enfant de sept ans à peine" writes M Jouhandeau, "nous jette dans une admiration mêlée à stupeur."

Although there are occasional clashes between Marc and his Jouhandeau, she follows her successful plan for the new adoption, announcing that she intends to leave her fortune, which is much larger than her husband's to Marc. M Jouhandeau promptly observes that "Céline est folle de lui". In a characteristic description of his own intense attachment, he declares: "Mon dévouement à Marc est une sorte de maoïsme". He goes even further when he remarks: "Marc est né dans ma vie, comme le Christ dans l'Histoire de Dieu."

Relations between husband and wife are as bad as ever. Although M Jouhandeau tells us that the way in which she managed to bring about the adoption of Marc "edifies" him, he remarks shortly afterwards that "Elise is her own Hell, mine and Marc's as well". Yet he has to admit that "it is the sin of homosexality which encumbers me in her eyes and justifies her".

In spite of this, it is clear that he is a reformed character and is as devoutly religious as he was even during his period of erratic behaviour. On Easter Sunday his wife, Monique and Marc all go to Mass, but he himself feels unable to go with them.

When he learns on their return that "Elise went to Communion with great pomp, without confession and after the anger that one knows about", he disapproves strongly and decides that she went to Communion not as a result of devotion but simply "to make an exhibition of herself". This is an indication that he is not simply pious, but extremely orthodox in religion. His inability to go to Mass on Easter Sunday suggests that he felt himself away by his own past guilt and has nothing in common with the priests who in our own day are arguing that homosexuality should somehow be worked into religion.

His orthodoxy does not stop there. He goes on to deplore the changes in religion, particularly the decline of the traditional Latin Mass (which may have contributed to his absence on Easter Sunday) and declares that after living happily in the solidity of the Catholic faith, as it was in the time of Pope John XXIII, "one cannot avoid suffering from the feeling that today it is dangerously shaken and degraded".

The last amusing reflection about himself turns up a few pages before the end of the book and shows that in spite of age M Jouhandeau still feels in good form: "Why is the age of eighty-three does God leave me as agile on land as a trout is in water?"

Sparks from the funeral pyre

By John Weightman

ANDRÉ MALRAUX :
L'Homme précaire et la littérature
330pp. Paris : Gallimard. 45fr.

Malraux, who evoked death so often in his writings, is now dead himself and his absence can be felt as an anti-climax, reminding us that the death even of a death-obsessed person is a blank like any other. Only life has meaning; death is less a comprehensible value than a hollow concept, used by rhetoricians to give an echo-chamber boom of solemnity to their comments on life. Malraux never hesitated to use such effects, and they occur again in this loosely shaped bundle of musings about man and civilization that he was apparently working on up to the moment of his final collapse.

What, for instance, are we to make of such sonorous but indefinite statements as: "Il faudrait bien découvrir un jour que le grand roman russe, c'est le roman européen régardé par la mort"? Or again: "L'aléatoire ne peut rien contre la mort"? They are about as illuminating as Victor Hugo's dictum in *William Shakespeare*: "Le génie est un promontoire dans l'infini", which has always seemed to me to be the touchstone of the genre, and indeed this book, whose title suggests that it is about literature, has the same approximate relationship to its subject and the same vaticinal tone as Hugo's volume on the English playwright. There is a certain kind of French *roseau pensant* which, when agitated, produces the august sound of a forest in a gale. But, as Malraux himself says, rather magnificently and with reference, precisely, to the vacuities of Hugo: "Tenir compte des vers négligeables ne serait pas de jeu: il faut ce qu'il faut: le vent pour que le bûcher flambe." A similar problem of intellectual draught arises in his own case; this particular funeral pyre bursts into flame only spasmodically, yet there is something grand about it that one cannot help admiring.

It would seem that Malraux set out with the intention of doing for literature what he had already done for the plastic arts—that is, of showing the ways in which the aesthetic gesture is a response to the mystery of life. The fourteen "chapters" of the work have all the appearance of improvisations, in the course of which the author frequently forgets his main theme and drifts back into the discussion of pictures and statues. Some sequences of sentences remain impenetrable for me, since I cannot work out which pronouns correspond to which antecedents. The punctuation is unusual and the grammar slightly eccentric. All in all, to continue the fire metaphor, this late-manner Malraux requires a deliberately sympathetic approach, as if one were not so much reading a critic as interpreting smoke-signals interspersed with showers of sparks.

He begins by rejecting academic literary history as being too linear and superficial—the Sorbonne simply did not exist in comparison with *La Nouvelle Revue Française* in its heyday—and he reminds us that it was he who had the idea, in the 1930s, of producing the Gallimard Tableau de la littérature française, that excellent series of studies of notable writers of the past by notable writers of the present.

Several contributions, particularly in the first volume (Valéry on Montesquieu, Cocteau on Rousseau, Guéhenno on Voltaire), have indeed a classic quality which goes some way towards illustrating Malraux's contention that literature, like the other arts, is carried on by mutual impregnation on the part of the creators, a process which may cut across the centuries. He would like to think that there is an "imaginary museum" of literature, as there is of painting and sculpture, but of course he has to admit, although reluctantly, that literary works, being shut inside their particular languages, cannot operate with the immediacy of art objects. However, he is unrelenting in his opposition to academic study; if the object of the university is to make works of art comprehensible within their historical context, he attaches little importance to the exercise:

"Comprendre une œuvre n'est pas une expression moins confuse que "comprendre un homme". Il ne s'agit pas de rendre une œuvre intelligible, mais de rendre sensible à ce qui fait sa valeur."

One might think that the second sentence has no meaning, since awareness of the value of a work would normally be considered as being inseparable from the process of making it intelligible, but Malraux's implication is that value, especially potential value, may exist without the artist himself understanding its presence in his work, and without that presence being detectable until some unforeseeable moment by some other artist. Critics are largely irrelevant to his view of the matter. Literature, like the other arts, is carried on by the minority of creators with, around them, the "sect" of devoted amateurs, the happy few who, at any point, form the immediate and valid audience of intuitive appreciators.

Malraux is not a time snob, like the aggressive modernists such as Artaud or Sartre, who think that the latest masterpiece is bound to be preferable to those of the past; on the contrary, all periods coexist in his *musée imaginaire*, and the ability to sense this is, in his view, the test of the amateur. But he is an elitist in that he divides off the minority of appreciators from the majority of philistines. Although in the last resort, art—including literature—is all that man has to set against the enigma of the universe, not all men, clearly, rise to a true understanding of their condition. Strangely enough, Malraux even seems to have an instinctive disregard for minor artists; just as, in his *Antimémoires*, he is only at home on the heights with de Gaulle, Trotsky, Mao, etc. so here, in his literary criticism, he invokes Sophocles, Shakespeare and Racine at every turn, and the prodigious roll-call tends to confuse the reader with a blur of grandeur.

At the same time, the still, small voice of common sense keeps asking insistent questions. Why, if Malraux is an elitist, did he become Minister for Cultural Affairs? Why, if culture is unteachable, did he favour *maisons de la culture*? Why, if the philistines are so numerous, did he send the "Mona Lisa" round the world to be exposed to their universal gaze? And, above all, why, if literary history is a waste of time, does he himself indulge in it? The obscurities and uncertainties of his text cannot conceal the fact that he is trying to work out a pattern of literary development from the Middle Ages to the present day. He is going over some of the same ground as was covered by Surté in *Qu'est-ce que la littérature?* and giving his version of the way in which different periods of literature are related to each other. Unlike Sartre, who is predominantly Marxist and anti-bourgeois, Malraux thinks in metaphysical terms and links the nature of art to the way *l'imaginaire* (the projection of the human imagination) is conditioned by changing patterns of religious awareness.

He is not afraid of sweeping generalizations and, if I have understood him rightly, he distinguishes four main periods in European culture. First, the Middle Ages, when *l'imaginaire-de-Vérité* reigned supreme and men expressed themselves mainly through the architecture of the cathedrals and the creation of sacred objects. At this period, art, in the modern sense, did not exist; the human artifact was thought to be a direct representation of absolute metaphysical truth. Nor had literature proper arisen as yet in Europe; medieval specialists may be perturbed to discover that Malraux relegates all the literary output of the period to *l'Imaginaire-de-Merveille*, which is a sort of fairy-tale domain existing in the shadow of religious conviction.

Next, the Renaissance which, like the Middle Ages, finds its supreme expression in art-objects rather than in literature:

A Michel-Ange qui ressuscite le héros et Titien qui ressuscite Vénus, quel poète égaler?

The Renaissance revived Alexandria and Rome rather than ancient Greece, but at least it was a great period for the theatre. It resuscitated tragedy "amputée de la cité", that is, I suppose, as literary experience not as immediate social rite. The birth of the theatre was événement parodique, puis rival, de la naissance de la cathédrale". Drama "représenté" à travers tion "de l'incarnation à la fiction incarnée"; Shakespeare, Corneille and Racine are the outstanding names of this Renaissance or post-Renaissance theatrical flowering.

We then leap to the novel of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the Middle Ages, religion and art had been synonymous; subsequently, the theatre, in a sense, had been "la métamorphose de la liturgie en spectacle" and a collective phenomenon. The novel corresponds to the development of the individual, who reads in solitude: "on découvre qu'on peut imaginer seul le grand jeu de l'Homme et de l'Imaginaire". There follow various remarks on Balzac, Stendhal, Flaubert, Dostoevsky, etc, which constitute the real literary meat of the book. The general message is that the novel was primarily a presentation of the Promethean individual, haunted by the myth of Napoleon. Even when the individual falls, as in Flaubert, the novel expressing the failure is its own triumph, and here we have a repetition of Malraux's well-known view that man's greatest achievement is his effective transposition of the way he is crushed by fate:

L'abjection des sociétés n'est sauvée que par leur littérature, car la création littéraire n'exprime pas les hommes, elle les dépasse mystérieusement, même quand elle les raille.

Since the great days of the novel, we have moved into the fourth period, in which literature proper has given way before the press, the cinema, television and other manifestations of the audio-visual, which have profoundly modified man's relationship with the world. The effect of the media is to "donner à des réalités l'éclat confus de l'imaginaire". Moreover, science and technology, which were a source of confidence in the nineteenth century, can now be seen in their dehumanizing nakedness: "la science ne possède aucune valeur ordonnatrice". Nor is Malraux an admirer of the audio-visual: "les grands romanciers apportaient à leurs lecteurs une maturité les grands films infantilisent leurs spectateurs". Because of the welter of images from the media, we live in a confused process of unpredictable change, which Malraux dubs *l'aléatoire*, and in which no concept of the sacred is possible. Modern man is, consequently *l'homme précaire*: "la plus puissante civilisation du monde aura enfanté l'homme précaire". Finally, having reached this point, Malraux appears to contradict himself quite openly because, on page 325, he asserts the necessity of faith:

Il faut que le monde ait un sens, pour que ce sens assume la souffrance, le Mal, fût-ce en tant que mystère....

while, on page 329, he proclaims the impossibility of faith:

Devant l'aléatoire, ni le monde ni l'homme n'ont de sens, puisque sa défaite les nomme, elle les dépasse mystérieusement, même quand elle les raille.

Is this the sad twilight of a once remarkable intelligence, or can one say that Malraux is just oscillating a shade too visibly in old age between the opposite and necessary poles of disbelief and conviction? I am inclined to suggest that this strange jumble of ideas, illuminated by an occasional brilliant phrase, results from the fact that Malraux, like Sartre, began his career as a post-Nietzschean Absurdist and, for reasons unknown, was never able fully to accept the logical consequences of his own early insights. The spectre of God seems to haunt them both, Malraux in a positive way, since he constantly betrays his desire to be at one with the sacred, like the cathedral-builders, the statue-makers and the painters whose work he so much admires, and Sartre in a negative way, since the dominant emotion in his writing is an atheistic reproach: fulness constantly looking for its absent object.

If Malraux had been a thorough Absurdist from the start, he would have seen that *l'aléatoire* and *la précarité*, far from being specifically modern phenomena, have always been part of the human condition, even in the so-called ages of faith. He himself emphasized them in *La Condition humaine*, but they emerge just as forcefully, as he himself no doubt sensed, from any one of the innumerable portrayals of the Crucifixion made at the height of Catholicism, and which deny faith at the same time as they assert it. The "metamorphosis" (to use his favourite term) characteristic of the modern world is that whereas Absurdism, more or less dimly perceived, was once the obverse of Faith, Faith in uncertain forms is now no more than the obverse of Absurdism. But in any case, in spite of the distinctions Malraux endeavours to make with such approximate flourishes, the subject of the literature of all periods has always been *l'homme précaire*, and presumably it will remain so.

The romantic lover's handbook

By Anita Brookner

BENJAMIN CONSTANT :
Lettres à Madame Récamier (1807-1830)
Edited by Ephraim Harpaz
309pp. Paris: Klincksieck. 88fr.

That Benjamin Constant should have fallen hopelessly in love with Juliette Récamier is not in itself amazing; after all, every other man of the age seems to have done so. But that the author of *Adolphe* should be so blind as to the effect of his worship on her apparently simple mind demonstrates all too clearly the limitations of the Romantic lover: his monumental self-absorption and his subsequently limited grasp of the partner's response. As Constant himself admitted, many years later, in a nicely edited version of his failure, "Je suis l'homme le plus vrai du monde, excepté en amour".

Julie Bernard, the object of his passion, was married to M Récamier, her elder by twenty-seven years, when she was sixteen (she herself says thirteen). Récamier had been her mother's lover and the fact that his bride remained a virgin until 1818 gives credence to the rumour that he was her genitive father. As a wife, Juliette Récamier was treated like the spoilt child she was to remain until her encounter with Chateaubriand. Of flawless and celebrated beauty, she was quite accustomed to adoration and indeed encouraged it: her performance of the shawl dance, at the climax of which she would pull out the long pin that restrained her dark hair, seems to have had for her pleasing but not erotic overtones. As handsome and increasingly desperate aspirants trooped through her lavish salon, she grew accustomed to the idea of love and did not much care for it. At the same time she hated to cause pain. Her heroine was the Princesse de Clèves, who retained her virtue (and her status) by dissuading, in high-minded dialogue, the Duc de Nemours from loving her. Juliette decided to do the same, to transform love into friendship by means of conversation, and indeed the aim is not dishonourable. But she was no strategist and merely succeeded in exasperating her lovers, not one of whom seems to have fathomed the depths of her extraordinary, even morbid, innocence.

Constant loved her in 1814-15, when she was in her late thirties and he in his late forties, and the story is really his, for none of her letters to him have survived. But an odd footnote to her emotional development is provided by a portrait of her by Baron Gros, usually described as "Madame Récamier âgée". This shows her wearing a fussy lace cap with chinband, an equally fussy collarette and shawl, and a long-sleeved dress that covers her almost to the knuckles. The life-long *ingénue* has turned into an old lady, yet the portrait was painted in 1824-25, which would make her a mere forty-seven. Her limpid eyes, ultimately to become sightless, gaze from unmarked sockets and the dimple is clearly marked on her chin. She looks like a dressed-up nun.

Constant's own emotional development contained equally troubled and troubling elements. His mother died a fortnight after his birth; his pathologically irritable father, when in his mid-thirties, abducted a nine-year-old girl and trained her up to [illegible] Discrepancies [illegible] Constant's story. Until he met Madame Récamier he was habitually attracted to women much older than himself, all to find their immortality as Ellénore. Some of these women—Mme de Charrière, Anne Lindsay, Mme de Staël—continued to pursue him long after his interest had been satisfied, and their insane persistence seems to have driven him slightly mad himself.

Mme de Staël, to whom he was understandably reluctant to break the news of his second marriage, was almost certainly the true love of his life, for they felt for each other spasms of an authentic hatred which could turn overnight into genuine friendliness. His extraordinary masterpiece, *Adolphe*, was read aloud in drawing-rooms, sometimes to roars of laughter, and he was not generally regarded as a novelist. A publicist, gambler, and lover, probably in that order of importance, his attractions seem to have been somewhat limited. Nevertheless, his wispy hair, red-rimmed eyes, and poor complexion commended him to many women of acute intelligence.

The first twenty years of the nineteenth century seem to have constituted the heyday of the tempestuous middle-aged mistress, in comparison with whom the flat calm of Juliette Récamier's company must have taken on an almost mystic singularity. The unflagging righteous wrath of Mme de Staël made it inevitable that Constant should be drawn to one whose voice is described by Chateaubriand as timid. But it was more than inevitable; it was the classic, or rather the Romantic, *coup de foudre*. On August 31, 1814, he noted in his *Journal*, "Mme. Récamier. Ah! çà! Deviens-je fou?" He had in fact met her several years previously; 1814 would appear to mark the second crystallization. The relationship was never consummated, his love was not returned, and his passion lasted for one year, during which he found time to embroil himself still further with Mme de Staël over the vexed question of their daughter's dowry, and to draft the constitution framed for Napoleon's brief return to power during the Hundred Days.

To feel the full force of the "dédoublement constantinien", these letters should be read in conjunction with the entries in the *Journal intime*. The diary notes are laconic, lucid, and sometimes cruel; the letters are long, rhapsodic, and feline in their power to wound. It is interesting to note Constant applying to his passion for Mme Récamier all the emotional fury with which he himself had so regularly been smashed into the ground by Mme de Staël. All he wants, he writes to Juliette, is a mere half-hour of her time. Unfortunately, he wants this mere half-hour *all* the time, and certain days Mme Récamier was obliged to put off his appointment from 2 pm to 9 pm in order to be able to talk to other admirers.

It would appear (though this is not of course true) that Constant only went home in order to write her letters promising that she would never see him again, that he was dying, that he would take no further nourishment, and that he was leaving Paris for ever. Before any of these matters could be put into effect, however, he would ask for a mere half-hour of her time. On December 9, 1814, his letter contains the following debatable points:

> Je ne vous reproche rien . . . vous serez consolée dans huit jours and vous ne serez même pas inquiète. Je vous supplie de ne rien dire à Mme. de St . . . Je vous verrai demain à une heure . . . Je n'ai pas eu dans mon sentiment le moindre mélange d'égoïsme . . . Je vais braver l'opinion, lutter contre les hommes. Jamais ils ne me feront souffrir comme j'ai souffert par celle à qui tout mon coeur était dévoué. . . .

And, a week later, "Vous serez étonnée, Madame, de recevoir encore une lettre . . .". The news of the defeat at Waterloo seems to have distracted him somewhat and he finds time to mention that France will now perish under the combined pressure of the Bourbons and the Cossacks. The letter continues, "Enfin j'espère vous voir encore dans une heure . . . Donnez des ordres pour qu'on me reçoive". And so on, until December 1815, writing all the way to Brussels where his wife was to join him.

It was a madness, the madness some of us are glad and some sorry to have known. Like all abnormal states of mind it had its moments of pathetic calculation, such as the offer to write Mme Récamier's biography, an offer the irresistible narcissist could not refuse. The *Mémoires de Juliette* reveal the limits of her sweet small mind and run out after a few pages. There was the despair that led him to Mme de Krüdener's dubious prayer-meetings, meetings at which Mme Récamier was asked to dress very simply, in grey, so as not to monopolize all the vibrations. There was even a pact with the devil, hints of which were dropped to Auguste de Staël and Victor de Broglie, at night, in a fast-travelling coach: a minor scene for Berlioz. It was the madness not only of the lover but of the gambler who will not leave the tables when his luck has run out. And after much specious, even ugly, pleading, comes a painful comment, written to her on October 23, 1815: "J'ai le souffert. Pourquoi venez-vous me chercher quand je ne songeais à vous? J'arrangeais ma vie, elle aurait peut-être été tolérable, ma réputation grandissait. Enfin tout détruit".

And it was over. He never fell in love again. His reputation flourished, his marriage was companionable. He grew older and was obliged to use crutches after a fall had damaged his hip. He worked for the public and for France; he even became handsome. Mme Récamier was forced by her husband's bankruptcy to sell her fashionable house and retire to an apartment in the Abbaye-aux-Bois where she presumably donned the curious outfit in which Gros painted her. She also acquired the honour of a pen mightier and more charitable than that of Constant. As *Adolphe*, that primer for the [illegible] morseful and the disenchanted Constant, in his letters to Mme Récamier, seems to have regained a spurious youth; it reads well but does not become him. But Chateaubriand, later the literary executor of his early years, finds immense with Mme Récamier: "En approchant de ma fin, il me semble que tout ce que j'ai aimé, le j'ai aimé dans Mme Récamier et qu'elle était la source cachée de toutes mes affections. . . . Elle régle mes sentiments, de même que l'autorité de Ciel a mis le bonheur, l'ordre et la paix dans mes devoirs."

Ephraim Harpaz's attractive edition of Constant's letters to Mme Récamier contains nearly all of the relevant passages from the *Journal intime* but not the *Mémoires de Juliette*, and is prefaced by an all too modest introduction. The ageless fascination of the personalities involved will no doubt inspire further biographies and editions, and students of Romanticism will be grateful for this handbook and guide to its most central document.

Notre-Dame de Nohant

By Christophe Campos

GEORGES LUBIN (Editor) :
Correspondance de George Sand
Tome XII : juin 1853—décembre 1854
831pp. Paris : Garnier. 100fr.

This latest volume of Georges Lubin's labour of love covers a meagre period in George Sand's life: eighteen months of the routine which has been the rule since she withdrew from politics in 1851. She makes occasional visits to her flat in the rue Racine to negotiate with publishers or theatre directors, or to see her plays performed; but her life is mainly at Nohant, where she gardens or bathes enthusiastically during the day, spends sociable, theatrical and light-hearted evenings with whatever visitors or members of her devoted band of young artist-secretaries the season has to offer, writes letters and literature until dawn and sleeps till noon. She is not quite a celebrity, like that staunchest exile Victor Hugo, but her early notoriety has matured gracefully and she commands respect among younger writers; we see here the first appearances, from the elder Dumas's playful pen, of the phrase "Notre-Dame . de Nohant".

Alas, that respect is often the result more of polite deference or flattery than of live admiration. The truth is that George Sand is beginning to seem a little out of date as Parisian fashions go: bourgeois drama and frivolous metropolitan comedy have taken over the stage, while realism is the order of the day in the novel. Audiences and critics find her plays tedious and provincial, and yet she labours on night after night, never ceasing to believe that the next one will be the winner, and getting involved, for her pains, in too much intrigue and counter-intrigue surrounding separate actors and managers; there is a set of more than thirty letters here about a play that never gets produced at all after five months of manoeuvring and calculated misunderstandings. Only her autobiography, *Histoire de ma vie*, which begins appearing in *La Presse*, excites active interest, motivated of course more by gossip than by its undoubted literary merit.

At home, Sand celebrates her fiftieth birthday, and, though the old spirit is still there, some of her youthful principles are slipping. We find her exhorting her daughter Solange and her son-in-law to avoid at any cost a public outcry over their separation. We read assurances of political quietism that are explicitly motivated by her fear of postal censors and yet are insidiously growing to be part of her nature. Death, too, overshadows this volume. Sand loses Gabriel Planet, one of her oldest and most trusted friends. Her granddaughter Jeanne, who has given her so much pleasure, is snatched away by the jealous father, and is about to die of scarlet fever at the end of the book. The hard winter of 1853-54 seems to have decimated her acquaintances and their elders.

What with all these personal and theatrical disappointments, and the succession of literary laundry bills that seem to have gathered here, even the indefatigable M Lubin appears to have felt this volume an onerous one to edit. The standard of proofreading is less than perfect (even the terminal date on the title-page and dust-jacket is wrong by six months), and the editor, as well as giving up hope of detailed comment on the theatrical intrigues, indulges a little tiresomely in footnotes defending his heroine's good faith against all comers, when she is patently playing one Parisian shark against another and will be applauded for doing so by any sensible reader.

Also, quite untypically, M Lubin gives only incomplete information and comment on two episodes that might have livened things up. First, Sand is involved in a quarrel with the Société des Gens de Lettres and resigns from it after a curio case—but what case, and why? Given the amount of paper left blank by letter pagination here, it should not be necessary to refer to outside biographical sources for such information. Secondly, it would appear that the anarchist socialist Burbès may have owed his release from prison to a letter Sand wrote to Napoleon III's cousin Jérôme: why is this inference discarded without comment?

For the selected correspondence which must surely follow the complete edition one day, there are perhaps half a dozen items here, mostly appearing in full for the first time: a letter to the novelist Champfleury, leader of the "realists", on his aesthetic; two typically warm-hearted messages of encouragement to Barbès on his release and self-imposed exile; an entertaining open letter to one Eugène de Mirecourt, author of a scurrilous biography of her; and two long accounts of her day-to-day life written to the publisher Hetzel, also in exile. The last volumes will, one hopes, be better bags. This one is already enlivened by the inclusion of a bright red advertisement for a subscriber's "centenary edition" of thirty volumes of collectors' items. Even M Lubin, or his publisher, balks at the Collected Works. Sand's attitude to literary output in the present collection of letters, an attitude that could well deserve Flaubert's jeering title *L'Art industriel*, goes a long way to explain why.

The latest issue of the excellent *L'Arc* (Aix-en-Provence, Chemin de la Répentance. 10fr.) is on Raymond Roussel. There is a typically brief and sly contribution from Alain Robbe-Grillet, a longer one from Michel Butor, and a very ingenious and incredible piece of bibliographical detective-work by Harry Matthews and Georges Perec. This last is a loyal tribute to the mad verbal games of Roussel himself, whose fascinating *confession, Comment j'ai écrit certains de mes livres* also just been republished in a cheap edition in the 10/18 series (320pp. Paris: Union Générale d'Éditions. 13.50fr.)

The immanent Idea

By Malcolm Bowie

YVES BONNEFOY :
Rue Traversière
120pp. 65 fr.
Le Nuage rouge
Essais sur la poétique
373pp. 70 fr.
Paris: Mercure de France.

In the title-work of Yves Bonnefoy's new collection of prose narratives, the rue Traversière is remembered as having led, during the poet's childhood, from the ordinary world into the wonderland of a botanical garden. The street was a perfectly named place of transition: "Est-ce ici, m'étais-je dit à plusieurs moments, que là-bas commence ?. . . Et dans ce groupe d'enfants qui jouent, au cerceau, aux billes, sur le trottoir déjoints par l'herbe, l'un n'est-il pas déjà de l'autre bord, ne touche-t-il pas les main des petites filles d'ici avec des doigts de ténèbre ?" Readers of Bonnefoy's earlier work will at once recognize the sort of place to this is: a keenly felt segment of the real world which owns up without prompting to its impermanence, its drift towards vacancy; a place which haunts him by showing absence minutely and inseparably woven into presence, flux into stability, losing into having. In a later text the narrator meets someone who has read "Rue Traversière" and found the street familiar. But this person remembers it as well-to-do, not poor, places it in a different part of town and knows nothing of the magic garden. Which of them had got things wrong? Whose street was real, whose invented? Perhaps language itself was the culprit and would allow indefinitely many possible streets to be called into actuality in the same way.

The relationship between the two texts is characteristic of the book as a whole. The telling of an experience makes its fullest sense in the retelling to which it gives rise. By superimposing narrative on narrative and by displacing the reader's attention into the region between descriptions, Bonnefoy gives the collection a precarious coherence and an exhaustiveness of sorts. But some of the material—and especially the rarefied travelogue for which he has a particular fondness—is so meagre that no amount of transitional thinking could lend it substance.

Le Nuage rouge is the largest and most varied collection of critical essays that Bonnefoy has so far published. It contains pieces on Rubens (as seen by Baudelaire), Bellini, Mondrian and a number of contemporary painters; on Mallarmé, Rimbaud, Jouve, Celan, Saint-John Perse and the *Chanson de Roland*; and on general topics within poetry and painting. But despite this range of subjects, Bonnefoy stands apart from that community of contemporary French critics where omniscience is the least of the neophyte's credentials. Where the fashionable intelligence knows everything and disputes everything, Bonnefoy knows, accepts, and stubbornly reapplies from essay to essay, one big thing.

What he knows is that although ideas are essential to the artist, in that they introduce creative activity into perception, the Idea is tyrannical. It infiltrates all human language, offers the artist false consolations and threatens to stunting the incipient work of art. The artist's responsibility is to keep the Idea immanent in the real place, the here-and-now, the human occasion. He must be wary of it as it hardens into metaphysical system and especially of the treacherous and all but irresistible dualisms represented, within Bonnefoy's polemic, by Platonism and Christianity.

The astonishing thing about *Le Nuage rouge* is that an anxiety of this kind—which lends the writer to parade obsessively and in so doing to re-glamorize the very habits of thought he condemns—should provoke so much precise, flexible and cliché-free criticism. Bonnefoy writes about his exemplary "immanent" artists (Mondrian's "The Red Cloud" is treated as their emblem) with an energy and a care for the particular that his earlier critical works often lacked. Here, from the essay on Saint-John Perse, is a typical modulation from his main abstract theme to an observed poetic world:

> Et rien . . . ne l'attire dans ces spéculations hellénisques qui, opposant l'intelligible au sensible, discréditent le lieu de notre vie. C'est toute métaphysique, dans son oubli des travaux et des jours d'une conscience plus simple, que le poète d'*Eloges* et encore d'*Exil* refuse—tout questionnement, toute mise en doute, toute création de réalités invisibles—parce qu'il n'en a nul besoin. Son sentiment à lui, c'est plutôt l'intuition "chinoise" d'un infini animé, odorant, gorgé de réalité comme une mer poissonneuse, où l'homme passe son jour comme le riverain dans sa barque.

But artists who falter before the metaphysical rigidities, or succumb to them, are also discussed sympathetically. Bellini, as opposed to, say, Mantegna, organizes his pictures in such a way that a strict discontinuity is visible between the divine dramas and their terrestrial settings. But the lesser prestige accorded to the sensible world does not prevent Bellini from bringing to it a dedicated and delicately inventive eye. The long essay on Baudelaire and Rubens is superb both for its depiction of the flow and recoil of sympathy between one great artist and another, and for the way in which the works of each are manipulated as an accurate observational device for those of the other. Throughout, Bonnefoy's account of the philosophical dilemmas which artists face is so arranged as to reveal what is there in works of art.

The task assigned by Bonnefoy to the language of criticism, which is in this respect indistinguishable from poetic language, is that of checking his own flight into the world of safe and inert conceptual entities. He writes with the air of one who enjoys taking chances with meaning, and his prose is strikingly opaque—not because he withholds information from his reader but because he crowds his sentences with randomizing or sense-deflecting incident. Bonnefoy's debt to the Surrealists' practice of automatic writing becomes plain when he evokes the shocks and mysteries which come upon the writer as his words unfold. But so do the limits of this debt: "Et vient un moment où les mots surgissent, ébauchant le réseau dont il me faudra remplir les espaces, comprendre le vouloir, élaguer le sens." His enjoyment of surprise, combined with this sometimes tardy desire to understand, gives his essays a much more complex rhythm of semantic dispersal and concentration than that of the classic Surrealist texts.

Both books contain passages of extraordinarily original verbal intention. And these emanate with singular urgency the struggles of the mind with loss and vacancy, and its aspiration towards a ground-level, occasion-based metaphysics. But there is another side to this. For the eventual coherence of the risk-taking sentence depends upon the writer's having a firm point to make, or at least a clear general direction for his speculations to follow. Where these are lacking, and Bonnefoy's mannerism is unchecked, we are left with vaguely uplifting and vaguely enigmatic cant.

Le Nuage rouge is one of Bonnefoy's finest achievements; and as every page tackles important aesthetic issues, and illuminates them, his obscurities and reiterations are easy to forgive. Bonnefoy is a lonely and heretical voice in modern French criticism. He is in rebellion, as he frequently reminds us, against the hegemony of the "text" among critical notions, and too concerned with the ways in which works of art rejoin, or fail to rejoin, the world of action to be able to treat them as autonomous systems of signs. In an age when we are commonly told that what lies beyond the text either is not worth bothering with or is text beneath another name, Bonnefoy insists that art works upon a world outside itself and that its boundaries and its incapacities matter. He writes of the puzzling rue Traversière: "Pourtant, et je demande que l'on me croie, l'énigme que je formule est dans ma vie aussi bien. L'étonnement va durer plus que les mots qui le disent. J'ai beau écrire, je suis aussi celui qui regarde le plan de la ville de son enfance, et ne comprend pas." The work of art, for Bonnefoy, resembles any other human place or occasion in so far as it is informed and threatened by that which it is not. He makes this unfashionable point with authority.

Eleven times table

By Robin Buss

GEORGES PEREC :
Alphabets
176pp. Paris : Galilée.

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> PTURBLIASON
> NETSBALOPUR
> EALOPUSINTR
> AITESONPLUS
> IELNATUFROS
> EGUARTLINSP
> TRAOULSENTSP
> UISENTPARGL
> EPOURLINSTA
> NTUSEAPOLIR

Epsilon :
ta rupture lla sonnets à loi pure à l'opus intraité.
Son pluriel n'a tu prose ou art l'inspire.
où lents puisent parole
pour l'instant usé à polir.

Like serial music, this is poetry reacting against the formal slackness and rhetorical devices which make up so much of contemporary verse. The strict, but quite arbitrary constraints of the form do not determine the content but go a long way towards eliminating the poet's discretion, so that the poem emerges as an elegant solution to the formal problem rather than as a loosely ordered statement of the poet's thoughts and feelings.

It is for this reason that Perec and Roubaud share their preoccupation with mathematics and with the Japanese game of *go*, which provides models for the manipulation of the bricks of language, concepts emerging from the game itself and not being imposed on it from outside. The principle is very simple, the practice very hard and the result not necessarily spectacular; these were Perec's criteria for his novel *La disparition*, written as a lipogram, or text in which the writer dispenses with one particular letter of the alphabet. In that case, the non-spectacular nature of the result was triumphantly demonstrated when some critics failed to notice that the disappearance in the title of the novel was that of the letter "e".

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The romantic lover's handbook

By Anita Brookner

BENJAMIN CONSTANT :
Lettres à Madame Récamier (1807-1830)
Edited by Ephraim Harpaz
309pp. Paris: Klincksieck. 88fr.

That Benjamin Constant should have fallen hopelessly in love with Juliette Récamier is not in itself amazing; after all, every other man of the age seems to have done so. But that the author of *Adolphe* should be so blind as to the effect of his worship on her apparently simple mind demonstrates all too clearly the limitations of the Romantic lover: his monumental self-absorption and his subsequently limited grasp of the partner's response. As Constant himself admitted, many years later, in a nicely edited version of his failure, "Je suis l'homme le plus vrai du monde, excepté en amour".

Julie Bernard, the object of his passion, was married to M Récamier, her elder by twenty-seven years, when she was sixteen (she herself says thirteen). Récamier had been her mother's lover and the fact that his bride remained a virgin until 1818 gives credence to the rumour that he was her genitive father. As a wife, Juliette Récamier was treated like the spoilt child she was to remain until her encounter with Chateaubriand. Of flawless and celebrated beauty, she was quite accustomed to adoration and indeed encouraged it: her performance of the shawl dance, at the climax of which she would pull out the long pin that restrained her dark hair, seems to have had for her pleasing but not erotic overtones. As handsome and increasingly desperate aspirants trooped through her lavish salon, she grew accustomed to the idea of love and did not much care for it. At the same time she hated to cause pain. Her heroine was the Princesse de Clèves, who retained her virtue (and her status) by dissuading, in high-minded dialogue, the Duc de Nemours from loving her. Juliette decided to do the same, to transform love into friendship by means of conversation, and indeed the aim is not dishonourable. But she was no strategist and merely succeeded in exasperating her lovers, not one of whom seems to have fathomed the depths of her extraordinary, even morbid, innocence.

Constant loved her in 1814-15, when she was in her late thirties and he in his late forties, and the story is really his, for none of her letters to him have survived. But an odd footnote to her emotional development is provided by a portrait of her by Baron Gros, usually described as "Madame Récamier âgée". This shows her wearing a fussy lace cap with chinband, an equally fussy collarette and shawl, and a long-sleeved dress that covers her almost to the knuckles. The life-long *ingénue* has turned into an old lady, yet the portrait was painted in 1824-25, which would make her a mere forty-seven. Her limpid eyes, ultimately to become sightless, gaze from unmarked sockets and the dimple is clearly marked on her chin. She looks like a dressed-up nun.

Constant's own emotional development contained equally troubled and troubling elements. His mother died a fortnight after his birth; his pathologically irritable father, when in his mid-thirties, abducted a nine-year-old girl and trained her up to be his second wife. Discrepancies of age abound in Constant's story. Until he met Madame Récamier he was habitually attracted to women much older than himself, all to find their immortality as Ellénore. Some of these women—Mme de Charrière, Anna Lindsay, Mme de Staël—continued to pursue him long after his interest had been satisfied, and their insane persistence seems to have driven him slightly mad himself.

Mme de Staël, to whom he was understandably reluctant to break the news of his second marriage, was almost certainly the true love of his life, for they felt for each other spasms of an authentic hatred which could turn overnight into genuine friendliness. His extraordinary masterpiece, *Adolphe*, was read aloud in drawing-rooms, sometimes to roars of laughter, and he was not generally regarded as a novelist. As publicist, gambler, and lover, probably in that order of importance, his attractions seem to have been somewhat limited. Nevertheless, his wispy hair, red-rimmed eyes, and poor complexion commended him to many women of acute intelligence.

The first twenty years of the nineteenth century seem to have constituted the heyday of the tempestuous middle-aged mistress, in comparison with whom the flat calm of Juliette Récamier's company must have taken on an almost mystic singularity. The unflagging righteous wrath of Mme de Staël made it inevitable that Constant should be drawn to one whose voice is described by Chateaubriand as timid. But it was more than inevitable; it was the classic, or rather the Romantic, *coup de foudre*. On August 31, 1814, he noted in his *Journal*, "Mme. Récamier. Ah! ça! Deviens-je fou?" He had in fact met her several years previously; 1814 would appear to mark the second crystallization. The relationship was never consummated, his love was not returned, and his passion lasted for one year, during which he found time to embroil himself still further with Mme de Staël over the vexed question of their daughter's dowry, and to draft the constitution framed for Napoleon's brief return to power during the Hundred Days.

To feel the full force of the "dédoublement constantinien", these letters should be read in conjunction with the entries in the *Journal intime*. The diary notes are laconic, lucid, and sometimes cruel; the letters are long, rhapsodic, and feline in their power to wound. It is interesting to note Constant applying to his passion for Mme Récamier all the emotional fury with which he himself had so regularly been smashed into the ground by Mme de Staël. All he wants, he writes to Juliette, is a mere half-hour of her time. Unfortunately, he wants this mere half-hour *all* the time, and on certain days Mme Récamier was obliged to put off his appointment from 2 pm to 9 pm in order to be able to talk to other admirers.

It would appear (though this is not of course true) that Constant only went home in order to write her letters promising that she would never see him again, that he was dying, that he would take no further nourishment, and that he was leaving Paris for ever. Before any of these matters could be put into effect, however, he would ask for a mere half-hour of her time. On December 9, 1814, his letter contains the following debatable points:

> Je ne vous reproche rien . . . vous serez consolée dans huit jours and vous ne serez même pas inquiète. Je vous supplie de ne rien dire à Mme. de St . . . Je vous verrai demain à une heure . . . Je n'ai pas eu dans mon sentiment le moindre mélange d'égoïsme . . . Je vais braver l'opinion, lutter contre les hommes. Jamais ils ne me feront souffrir comme j'ai souffert par celle à qui tout mon coeur était dévoué. . . .

And, a week later, "Vous serez étonnée, Madame, de reçevoir encore une lettre . . .". The news of the defeat at Waterloo seems to have distracted him somewhat and he finds time to mention that France will now perish under the combined pressure of the Bourbons and the Cossacks. The letter continues, "Enfin j'espère vous voir encore dans une heure . . . Donnez des ordres pour qu'on me reçoive". And so on, until December 1815, writing all the way to Brussels where his wife was to join him.

It was a madness, the madness some of us are glad and some sorry to have known. Like all abnormal states of mind it had its moments of pathetic calculation, such as the offer to write Mme Récamier's biography, an offer the irresistible narcissist could not refuse. The *Mémoires de Juliette* reveal the limits of her sweet small mind and run out after a few pages. There was the despair that led him to Mme de Krüdener's dubious prayer-meetings, meetings at which Mme Récamier was asked to dress very simply, in grey, so as not to monopolize all the vibrations. There was even a pact with the devil, hints of which were dropped to Auguste de Staël and Victor de Broglie, at night, in a fast-travelling coach: a minor scenario for Berlioz. It was the madness not only of the lover but of the gambler who will not leave the tables when his luck has run out. And after much special, even ugly, pleading, comes the painful comment, written to her on October 23, 1815: "J'ai bien souffert. Pourquoi veniez-vous me chercher quand je ne songeais pas à vous? J'arrangeais ma vie, elle aurait peut-être été tolérable, ma réputation grandissait. Enfin ça détruit".

And it was over. He never fell in love again. His reputation flourished, his marriage was companionable. He grew older and was obliged to use crutches after a fall had damaged his hip. He wrote for the public and for France; he even became handsome. Mme Récamier was forced by her husband's bankruptcy to sell her fashionable house and retire to an apartment in the Abbaye-aux-Bois, where she presumably donned the curious outfit in which Gros painted her. She also acquired the homage of a pen mightier and more charitable than that of Constant. After *Adolphe*, that primer for the remorseful and the disenchanted, Constant, in his letters to Mme Récamier, seems to have regained a spurious youth; it reads well but does not become him. But Chateaubriand, after the literary excesses of his early years, finds maturity with Mme Récamier: "En approchant de ma fin, il me semble que tout ce que j'ai aimé, je l'ai aimé dans Mme Récamier et qu'elle était la source cachée de toutes mes affections. . . . Elle règle mes sentiments, de même que l'autorité du Ciel a mis le bonheur, l'ordre et la paix dans mes devoirs."

Ephraim Harpaz's attractive edition of Constant's letters to Mme Récamier contains nearly all of the relevant passages from the *Journal intime* but not the *Mémoires de Juliette*, and is prefaced by an all too modest introduction. The endless fascination of the personalities involved will no doubt inspire further biographies and editions, and students of Romanticism will be grateful for this handbook and guide to its most central doctrine.

Notre-Dame de Nohant

By Christophe Campos

GEORGES LUBIN (Editor) :
Correspondance de George Sand
Tome XII : juin 1853—décembre 1854
831pp. Paris: Garnier. 100fr.

This latest volume of Georges Lubin's labour of love covers a meagre period in George Sand's life: eighteen months of the routine which has been the rule since she withdrew from politics in 1851. She makes occasional visits to her flat in the rue Racine to negotiate with publishers or theatre directors, or to see her plays performed; but her life is mainly at Nohant, where she gardens or bathes enthusiastically during the day, spends sociable, theatrical and light-hearted evenings with whatever visitors or members of her devoted band of young artist-secretaries the season has to offer, writes letters and literature until dawn and sleeps till noon. She is not quite a celebrity, like that stauncher exile Victor Hugo, but her early notoriety has matured gracefully and she commands respect among younger writers: we see here the first appearance, from the elder Dumas's playful pen, of the phrase "Notre-Dame de Nohant".

Alas, that respect is often the result more of polite deference or flattery than of live admiration. The truth is that George Sand is beginning to seem a little out of date as Parisian fashions go: bourgeois drama and frivolous metropolitan comedy have taken over the stage, while realism is the order of the day in the novel. Audiences and critics find her plays tedious and provincial, and yet she labours on night after night, never ceasing to believe that the next one will be the winner, and getting involved, for her pains, in too much intrigue and counter-intrigue surrounding second-rate actors and managers; there is a set of more than thirty letters here about a play that never gets produced at all after five months of manoeuvring and calculated misunderstandings. Only her autobiography, *Histoire de ma vie*, which begins appearing in *La Presse*, excites active interest, motivated of course more by gossip than by its undoubted literary merit.

At home, Sand celebrates her fiftieth birthday, and, though the old spirit is still there, some of her youthful principles are slipping. We find her exhorting her daughter Solange and her son-in-law to avoid at any cost a public outcry over their separation. We read assurances of political quietism that are explicitly motivated by her fear of postal censors and yet are insidiously growing to be part of her nature. Death, too, overshadows this volume. Sand loses Gabriel Planet, one of her oldest and most trusted friends. Her granddaughter Jeanne, who has given her so much pleasure, is snatched away by the jealous father, and is about to die of scarlet fever at the end of the book. The hard winter of 1853-54 seems to have decimated her acquaintances and their elders.

What with all these personal and theatrical disappointments, and the succession of literary laundry bills that seem to have gathered here, even the indefatigable M Lubin appears to have felt this volume an onerous one to edit. The standard of proofreading is less than perfect (even the terminal date on the title-page and dust-jacket is wrong by six months), and the editor, as well as giving up hope of detailed comment on the theatrical intrigues, indulges a little tiresomely in footnotes defending his heroine's good faith against all comers, when she is patently playing one Parisian shark against another and will be applauded for doing so by any sensible reader.

Also, quite untypically, M Lubin gives only incomplete information and comment on two episodes that might have livened things up. First, Sand is involved in a quarrel with the Société des Gens de Lettres and resigns from it after a court case—but what case, and why? Given the amount of paper left blank by letter pagination here, it should not be necessary to refer to outside biographical sources for such information. Secondly, it would appear that the anarchist socialist Barbès may have owed his release from prison to a letter Sand wrote to Napoleon III's cousin Jérôme: why is the inference discarded without comment?

For the selected correspondence which must surely follow the complete edition one day, there are perhaps half a dozen items here, mostly appearing in full for the first time: a letter to the novelist Champfleury, leader of the "realists", on his aesthetic; two typically warm-hearted messages of encouragement to Barbès on his release and self-imposed exile; an entertaining open letter to one Eugène de Mirecourt, author of a scurrilous biography of her; and two long accounts of her day-to-day life written to the publisher Hetzel, also in exile. The next volumes will, one hopes, [illegible] better bags. This one is at least enlivened by the inclusion of a bright red advertisement for a subscriber's "centenary edition" of thirty volumes of collectors' title. Even M Lubin, or his publisher, baulk at the Collected Works. Sand's attitude to literary output in the present collection of letters, an attitude that could well deserve Flaubert's jeering title *L'Art industriel*, goes a long way to explain why.

The latest issue of the excellent *L'Arc* (Aix-en-Provence, Chemin de la Répentance. 10fr.) is on Raymond Roussel. There is a typically brief and sly contribution from Alain Robbe-Grillet, a longer one from Michel Butor, and a very ingenious if incredible piece of bibliographical detective-work by Harry Matthews and Georges Perec. This last is a loyal tribute to the mad verbal games of Roussel himself, whose fascinating confession *Comment j'ai écrit certains de mes livres* has also just been republished in a cheap edition in the 10/18 series (320pp. Paris: Union Générale d'Editions. 13.50fr.)

The immanent Idea

By Malcolm Bowie

YVES BONNEFOY :
Rue Traversière
120pp. 65 fr.
Le Nuage rouge
Essais sur la poétique
373pp. 70 fr.
Paris: Mercure de France.

In the title-work of Yves Bonnefoy's new collection of prose narratives, the rue Traversière is remembered as having led, during the poet's childhood, from the ordinary world into the wonderland of a botanical garden. The street was a perfectly named place of transition: "Est-ce ici, m'étais-je dit à plusieurs moments, que là-bas commence?... Et dans ce groupe d'enfants qui jouent, au cerceau, aux billes, sur le trottoir déjointe par l'herbe, l'un n'est-il pas déjà de l'autre bord, ne touche-t-il pas les main des petites filles d'ici avec des doigts de ténèbre?" Readers of Bonnefoy's earlier work will at once recognize the sort of place this is: a keenly felt segment of the real world which owns up without prompting to its impermanence, its drift towards vacancy; a place which haunts him by showing absence minutely and inseparably woven into presence, flux into stability, losing into having. In a later text the narrator meets someone who has read "Rue Traversière" and found the street familiar. But this person remembers it as well-to-do, not poor, places it in a different part of town and knows nothing of the magic garden. Which of them had got things wrong? Whose street was real, whose invented? Perhaps language itself was the culprit and would allow indefinitely many possible streets to be called into actuality in the same way.

The relationship between the two texts is characteristic of the book as a whole. The telling of an experience makes its fullest sense in the retelling to which it gives rise. By superimposing narrative on narrative and by displacing the reader's attention into the region between descriptions, Bonnefoy gives the collection a precarious coherence and an exhaustiveness of sorts. But some of the material—and especially the rarefied travelogue for which he has a particular fondness—is so meagre that no amount of transitional thinking could lend it substance.

Le Nuage rouge is the largest and most varied collection of critical essays that Bonnefoy has so far published. It contains pieces on Rubens (as seen by Baudelaire), Bellini, Mondrian and a number of contemporary painters; on Mallarmé, Rimbaud, Jouve, Celan, Saint-John Perse and the *Chanson de Roland*; and on general topics within poetry and painting. But despite this range of subjects, Bonnefoy stands apart from that community of contemporary French critics where omniscience is the least of the neophyte's credentials. Where the fashionable intelligence knows everything and disputes everything, Bonnefoy knows, accepts, and stubbornly reapplies from essay to essay, one big thing.

What he knows is that although ideas are essential to the artist, in that they introduce creative disunity into perception, the Idea is tyrannical. It infiltrates all human language, offers the artist false consolations and threatens to stultify the incipient work of art. The artist's responsibility is to keep the Idea immanent to the real place, the here-and-now, the human occasion. He must be wary of it as it hardens into metaphysical system and especially of the treacherous and all but irresistible dualisms represented, within Bonnefoy's polemic, by Platonism and Christianity.

The astonishing thing about *Le Nuage rouge* is that an anxiety of this kind—which leads the writer to parade obsessively and in so doing to re-glamorize the very habits of thought he condemns—should provoke so much precise, flexible and cliché-free criticism. Bonnefoy writes about his exemplary "immanent" artists (Mondrian's "The Red Cloud" is treated as their emblem) with an energy and a care for the particular that his earlier critical works often lacked. Here, from the essay on Saint-John Perse, is a typical modulation from his main abstract theme to an observed poetic world:

> Et rien . . . ne l'attire dans ces spéculations helléniques qui, opposant l'intelligible au sensible, discréditent le lieu de notre vie. C'est toute métaphysique, dans son oubli des travaux et des jours d'une conscience plus simple, que le poète d'*Eloges* et encore d'*Exil* refuse—tout questionnement, toute mise en doute, toute création de réalités invisibles—parce qu'il n'en a nul besoin. Son sentiment à lui, c'est plutôt l'intuition "chinoise" d'un infini animé, odorant, gorgé de réalité comme une mer poissonneuse, où l'homme passe son jour comme le riverain dans sa barque.

But artists who falter before the metaphysical rigidities, or succumb to them, are also discussed sympathetically. Bellini, as opposed to, say, Mantegna, organizes his pictures in such a way that a strict discontinuity is visible between the divine dramas and their terrestrial settings. But the lesser prestige accorded to the sensible world does not prevent Bellini from bringing to it a dedicated and delicately inventive eye. The long essay on Baudelaire and Rubens is superb both for its depiction of the flow and recoil of sympathy between one great artist and another, and for the way in which the works of each are manipulated as an accurate observational device for those of the other. Throughout, Bonnefoy's account of the philosophical dilemmas which artists face is so arranged as to reveal what is there in works of art.

The task assigned by Bonnefoy to the language of criticism, which is in this respect indistinguishable from poetic language, is that of checking his own flight into the world of safe and inert conceptual entities. He writes with the air of one who enjoys taking chances with meaning, and his prose is strikingly opaque—not because he withholds information from his reader but because he crowds his sentences with randomizing or sense-deflecting incident. Bonnefoy's debt to the Surrealists' practice of automatic writing becomes plain when he evokes the shocks and mysteries which come upon the writer as his words unfold. But so do the limits of this debt: "Et vient un moment où les mots surgissent, ébauchant le réseau dont il me faudra remplir les espaces, comprendre le vouloir, élaguer le sens." His enjoyment of surprise, combined with this sometimes tardy desire to understand, gives his essays a much more complex rhythm of semantic dispersal and concentration than that of the classic Surrealist texts.

Both books contain passages of extraordinarily original verbal intention. And these enact with singular urgency the struggles of the mind with loss and vacancy, and its aspiration towards a ground-level, occasion-based metaphysics. But there is another side to this. For the eventual coherence of the risk-taking sentence depends upon the writer's having a firm point to make, or at least a clear general direction for his speculations to follow. Where these are lacking, and Bonnefoy's mannerism is unchecked, we are left with vaguely uplifting and vaguely enigmatic cant.

Le Nuage rouge is one of Bonnefoy's finest achievements; and as every page tackles important aesthetic issues, and illuminates them, his obscurities and reiterations are easy to forgive. Bonnefoy's is a lonely and heretical voice in modern French criticism. He is in rebellion, as he frequently reminds us, against the hegemony of the "text" among critical notions, and too concerned with the ways in which works of art rejoin, or fail to rejoin, the world of action to be able to treat them as autonomous systems of signs. In an age when we are commonly told that what lies beyond the text either is not worth bothering with or is text beneath another name, Bonnefoy insists that art works upon a world outside itself and that its boundaries and its incapacities matter. He writes of the puzzling rue Traversière: "Pourtant, et je demande que l'on me croie, l'énigme que je formule est dans ma vie aussi bien, l'étonnement va durer plus que les mots qui le disent. J'ai beau écrire, je suis aussi celui qui regarde le plan de la ville de son enfance, et ne comprend pas." The work of art, for Bonnefoy, resembles any other human place or occasion in so far as it is informed and threatened by that which it is not. He makes this unfashionable point with authority.

Eleven times table

By Robin Buss

GEORGES PEREC : -
Alphabets
176pp: Paris: Galilée.

The poems of *Alphabets* are "onzains hétérogrammatiques": even if the form is unfamiliar to them, readers of Georges Perec's other literary devices will know what to expect. Each poem has eleven lines, each line eleven letters, the same letters being repeated throughout the text but occurring once only in each line. All the poems contain the ten most frequently used letters in the French alphabet and these form a bed in which is set one of the remaining sixteen letters, with the result that every poem permutates the letters ESARTINULO around the "starring" letter for that text. The less common letters each star in a series of eleven poems, making a total of 176 poems in all. The texts are printed as solid blocks (11 x 11) with no space between words, and accompanied by a "prose" translation which respects the division of words and will look to most people more like a poem. The following, dedicated to Jacques Roubaud and, like the others in the collection, carefully annotated with place and date of composition, is a poem in P:

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Epsilon :
ta rupture lia sonnets à loi pure à l'opus intraité.
Son pluriel n'a tu prose où art l'inspira,
où lents puisent parole
pour l'instant usé à polir.

Like serial music, this is poetry reacting against the formal slackness and rhetorical devices which make up so much of contemporary verse. The strict, but quite arbitrary constraints of the form do not determine the content but go a long way towards eliminating the poet's discretion, so that the poem emerges as an elegant solution to the formal problem rather than as a loosely ordered statement of the poet's thoughts and feelings.

It is for this reason that Perec and Roubaud share their preoccupation with mathematics and with the Japanese game of *go*, which provides models for the manipulation of the bricks of language, concepts emerging from the game itself and not being imposed on it from outside. The principle is very simple, the practice very hard and the result not necessarily spectacular: these were Perec's criteria for his novel *La disparition*, written as a lipogram, or text in which the writer dispenses with one particular letter of the alphabet. In that case, the non-spectacular nature of the result was triumphantly demonstrated when some critics failed to notice that the disappearance in the title of the novel was that of the letter "e".

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Day release

By E. S. Turner

ALAN DELGADO:
The Annual Outing
173pp. Allen and Unwin. £4.95.

In the 1820s, according to Cobbett, stock-jobbers would travel by coach from Brighton to London, spend two-and-a-half profitable hours in Change Alley, then ride back to Brighton the same day. How many London families used to travel in the reverse direction for two-and-a-half-hours' paddling? In his opening sentence Alan Delgado says that, at this period, the London-Brighton excursion "would be accomplished in a day by barouche", but his account of one such journey ends disappointingly in Kennington Village.

The one-day outings discussed in this unpretentious foray into social history range from the organized excursions of employees, Sunday-school children and waifs to the cheap day trips, without benefit of bands and banners, pioneered on the railways by Thomas Cook. Sometimes the staff outing was called an Annual Beanfeast, traditionally a blow-out at which a grateful employer stuffs his workpeople with beans; but the Ferranti Beanfeast at Brighton in 1890 offered the loyal workers beef, lamb, ham, veal, fowl and duck.

One of Mr Delgado's photographs shows a well-dressed multitude in the grounds of Hever Castle, seat of the Astors, in 1937. They were the cream of the employees of *The Times* (and, one hopes, of the *TLS*). "There were two sittings for the 3,300 people present and the menu included cold salmon, cold chicken, tongue, ham, strawberry melba with home-made lemonade, claret cup and ale." A brochure said that "Dr Wilson of *The Times*" would be present throughout the day. It is distressing to be told that, to some guests, this beneficent was "an annual penance".

In unenvious days, the staff outing often ended on the employer's lawns. Edward Ecroyd, the mill-owner, allowed 1,200 of his workers to visit his estate at Armathwaite in Cumberland in 1881. Thirty-nine captains were appointed to ensure decorum and prevent flower-picking. The food ran out, but fresh and ample supplies were quickly rustled up. In a speech Ecroyd referred to the benefits that worship bestows on the faithful and the response came, "Aye, we know it".

For the outing, workers and families put on their Sunday best, withdrawing gimmonts from pawn if need be. There would be handsome tributes to the employer for his munificence. The need for prayer and hymns was not disputed. There was even a Hymn For The Annual Summer Outing ("Bring us safely back again/Free from sorrow, harm and pain").

If the boss had no spacious grounds, the outing might be held in somebody else's, but decent behaviour remained of the first importance. When Sir George Beaumont, in 1850, opened the gardens of Coleorton Hall, the Cook's handbill begged the visitors not to "handle the statues". Perhaps it was the handling of statues that drove Parson Kilvert to his wild denunciations of trippers ("no wonder dogs fly at them and consider them vermin to be exterminated"). But dukes could set an example of tolerance to parsons. In *The Rainbow Comes and Goes* Diana Cooper says that her grandfather, the seventh Duke of Rutland, loved day trippers and refused to charge them admission to Belvoir Castle, even though (as she complaisantly adds) their smell was asphyxiating and they picknicked everywhere in sight.

Fresh-air outings for poor children needed a high degree of organization. Mr Delgado quotes the ground rules from Dr Barnardo's *Night and Day*: separate trains for boys, girls and even infants; the destination to be "as far removed from a public-house as it is possible to be"; and if public-houses cannot be avoided, strong trustworthy men to be posted at their doors.

For his material Mr Delgado has gone through the records of a number of leading companies. As a rule nothing much happened on the outings and they were reported in stilted, arch or banal style ("proceeded to regale themselves with ices"; "Those visiting London for the first time were heard to comment, 'Well, I *never*! Lawk a daisy! Mercy me!'"). Too often the outing appealed to those who, untrained to prose, fell back on verse.

Embedded in these pages are delightful nuggets of information. Where else could one learn that the Scarborough station-master used to offer excursionists a spirited farewell by putting detonators on the line? But in the mass the material tends to be scrappy and repetitious. The author misses a big chance by dismissing in two short paragraphs the railway excursions run to the scene of public hangings. In 1840, when three specials carried sightseers to Bodmin to see the end of William Lightfoot, nearly half the population of Wadebridge, home of the murdered man, attended. "As the jail adjoined the Bodmin railway depot, passengers were able to see the spectacle in comfort without having to leave their carriages." Surely this sort of Awayday must have stirred fierce criticism in press and pulpit? Did railway shareholders just pocket the profits and say nothing? We are not told.

Mr Delgado's photographs are a delight. The charabanc, that great liberator, was a glorious vehicle at any time, but how much more glorious when packed with the Bedminster Ebenezer Sisterhood or Pilkington's Bevelling Department.

Match of the day

By Vernon Scannell

ALAN LLOYD:
The Great Prize Fight
188pp. Cassell. £4.50.

On April 17, 1860, Tom Sayers, the prize-ring champion of England, fought at Farnborough in Hampshire an American bruiser called John C. Heenan for what was effectively the first tour for the championship of the world. Public enthusiasm for the encounter both in England and the United States was tremendous, and when the contest took place thousands of spectators of many nationalities and from all social levels travelled to the ring-side and large sums of money were wagered on the outcome of the battle. Heenan was eight years younger, five inches taller and over two-and-a-half stone heavier than the Englishman, who weighed only eleven stone (weight divisions in boxing were not to be introduced for another thirty years), but Sayers was far more experienced and had beaten many adversaries, who had possessed physical advantages similar to those enjoyed by Heenan.

Prize-fighting, though patronized by a large part of the sporting aristocracy, and even by royalty—George IV had been an ardent admirer of Mendoza, English champion in 1792—had been illegal since 1750; the fight between Sayers and Heenan was broken up by the police after forty-two rounds and two hours and twenty minutes of savage battling, and a draw was declared by the referee. At this stage both contestants were in an appalling physical condition. Sayers's left arm had been almost pulped by hammer blows from the American and was of no use to him as a tool of aggression and of very little or no shield against Heenan's fearsome attacks. Heenan was almost totally blinded by huge swellings around the eyes, and both boxers' faces were so smashed that the sight of them shocked even the most hardened of that coarse assembly. Frederick Locker-Lampson, who witnessed the bout, wrote in *My Confidences* of "Heenan's face, out of which all that was human had been pounded", and exclaimed: "Heaven forbid that the prize-ring should ever be revived in all its hideous and loathsome degradation!" In the same paragraph, he expressed the view that "a match is the voluntary exhibition of pluck and endurance; there is no malice; and it proves to the world that the stuff of which a man is made. There was something in that great fight which the whole world recognized, for it appealed to a very universal sympathy." The coexistence of contradictory responses to the game, admiration and sense of the heroic unequally mingling with revulsion and shame, is at the heart of *The Great Prize Fight*.

Alan Lloyd does not allow his own preferences or prejudices to affect his narrative. He has done a very thorough job of research and his objectivity and the skill with way in which he has organized his material are exemplary. There are fascinating glimpses of people you would not expect to meet in a book about bare-knuckle fighting in the mid-nineteenth century: Samuel Smiles, the author of *Self Help*, secretary of the South Eastern Railway Board; William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army; Swinburne and Whitman and—a rather surprising boxing enthusiast—Lord Palmerston. The poets are there because they both at different times and in different places encountered Heenan's bigamous wife, an Amazonian lady of some notoriety, Adah Isaacs Menken, a wonderfully bad actress who wrote verse and became renowned for her performance in *Mazeppa* in which, clad in the tight silk, she was secured to the back of a horse which ascended a wooden ramp on the stage and afforded an excited audience what must have been, in most cases, the unprecedented view of the female form divine.

The Great Prize Fight is an absorbing tale and a useful piece of social history. Alan Lloyd allows contemporary writers to describe the good deal of the action of the fight itself and here he shows sound judgment. The boxing writers of the time were far more readable than most modern representatives of the species, and Lloyd's own prose, while generally quite serviceable is never more and occasionally less than that, as when, for example, in comparing two writers on the Noble Art he says: "In spite of the colloquialistic dash of Pierce Egan while labouring a more formal education." Here, "labouring" seems not merely clumsy but, in its intransitive use, incomprehensible. But the few lapses of this kind do little to impair the richness, vigour and dramatic excitement of the book.

A portrait of Ethel Sands, one of the paintings (twenty-two by Ethel Sands herself) on show at the Fine Art Society, 148 New Bond Street, London, until May 20. The exhibition coincides with the publication of Wendy Baron's book Miss Ethel Sands and her Circle, *shortly to be reviewed in the* TLS. *Logan Pearsall Smith found Sickert's portrait a masterpiece, but commented "E.S. seen as a harpy or gorgon, rather than the dove".*

After the coronation

By David Hunt

JOHN COLVILLE:
The New Elizabethans 1952-1977
319pp. Collins. £6.50.

The Queen's Silver Jubilee year has already inspired celebrations from many courtly pens. Sir John Colville is eminently suited for the task of laying another tribute at Her Majesty's feet since in virtue of posts he has held he can be called an ex-courtier and by temperament and conviction he is a fixed and fervent monarchist. Instead he has chosen to write about the people of Britain. His aim is to describe the changes that have taken place in the past twenty-five years. For this he has many qualifications. He has been a diplomatist and a pilot on active service in the RAF; after serving three Prime Ministers, and the Queen, as Princess Elizabeth, before her accession, he was in 1952 Joint Principal Private Secretary to Churchill; since then he has been a director of a merchant bank and one of the founders of Churchill College, Cambridge. Besides all this he has distinguished himself not only as a serious historian but also, in lighter vein, as a writer of witty and illuminating reminiscences. What he has produced here is a work of political, economic and, in particular, sociological history.

His title *The New Elizabethans* recalls the enthusiasm with which many people contemplated the new reign, with fond recollections of the reigns of past queens. Those sanguine expectations have so far been disappointed, although he does well to remind us that a book such as this written after the first twenty-five years of Elizabeth I would have been dismal reading and the glories of that famous reign came in its last twenty years. His account of Britain's place in the world cannot avoid the influence of Dean Acheson's sombre aphorism: "Britain has lost an Empire and failed to find a role." Nevertheless, cheerfulness is always breaking in, as with the philosophical Oliver Edwards. He has a just appreciation of the Commonwealth. This association of free peoples, whose members remain associated because they wish to be, is correctly numbered as one of our great assets, and as a benefit to the world in general.

The universal dissemination of the English language, though he does think that in its metropolitan home it has suffered a sad deterioration.

Arts, education and science, religion and morals, industry, agriculture and public health are separately discussed. Two topics are particularly well handled, the City and the trade unions; with the first he has close and direct experience, with the second presumably very little. The City has changed greatly, because it has retained its traditional gift for innovation and experiment. He singles out for special mention the growth of the Export Credits Guarantee system and the invention of the Euro-dollar market. The astonishing increase in the City's earnings from invisible exports has frequently turned a loss on visible trade into a surplus. As for the TUC, its leaders' hearts must swell with pride at the judicious and balanced tribute paid to them by a writer of a predominantly conservative temperament:

> A wholesome aspect of the modern, startling increase in the power of the Unions is the fact that at their best they represent the independence of the industrial working man, an independence which is a powerful bulwark against the dictatorship of right or left and, however Socialist the Unions may profess to be, against the encroachment of the State on the rights of the individual.

One of the most engaging items of Sir John Colville's life of Lord Gort, *Men of Valour*, was his account of sparkling pen-portraits of the men of Munich. His chapter on the Queen's seven Prime Ministers shows the same skill. Churchill in 1952 was "as he had always been, a Liberal at heart" though he was also more like an Old Testament prophet than a Prime Minister. Collingwood, "as unperturbed as Lord Cardigan, canters at the head of his Light and progressively Lighter Brigade, disregarding the volleys of right of him and the still louder volleys to left of him". Of the five in between he obviously favours Macmillan but Sir Harold Wilson, with whom his sympathies are undoubtedly less than complete, is treated with a sincere devotion to the interests of Britain. It is a judgment which will represent the grave and impartial tone of the whole book.

The ruling conventions

By Vernon Bogdanor

NEVIL JOHNSON:
In Search of the Constitution
226pp. Pergamon Press. £6.

For at least fifteen years after the Second World War, the "Westminster model" retained undisputed sway as an exemplar of the workings of a successful democracy. Since the early 1960s, however, and in particular from the advent of Harold Wilson's first administration in 1964, few of our political institutions have escaped scrutiny and reform. The system of control of public expenditure, the structure of local government, the civil service, the central departments, and the procedure of the House of Commons have all been refashioned to meet the needs of a new age. Yet it would be idle to pretend that these reforms have led either to a more effective structure of government, or one that is more in accord with popular feeling. Indeed there is probably greater dissatisfaction with the political system at the end of the process than there was at the beginning, a dissatisfaction that has found expression in Harold Macmillan's call for a government of "national unity", and in Lord Hailsham's fear that we are living under an elective dictatorship. Samuel Brittan, the *enfant terrible* of the market economists, has indeed gone even further and suggested that modern liberal democracies everywhere suffer "from internal contradictions" which "are particularly acute in this country", being "likely to increase in time"; so that "on present indications, the system is likely to pass away within the lifetime of people now adult".

Nevil Johnson, who as well as being Reader in the Comparative Study of Institutions at Oxford is an authority on the government of West Germany, sees as the prime cause of our troubles an unwillingness to take a general view of the aims which political institutions are expected to achieve. For institutions find meaning only in a specific historical context, and only with reference to the concrete purposes which politicians set themselves. Reform to be effective requires, therefore, some attention to principles of government, rather than a reliance upon an apolitical notion of efficiency. We have, indeed, been "foolish enough to treat management consultants as latter-day witch doctors". The result has been "plenty of differences in the organizational scenery, but little new in the play which is acted out on the stage".

The central theme of Mr Johnson's distinguished book, *In Search of the Constitution*, is that the gap between received constitutional doctrine, such as it is, and current political practice is too wide. As a result there are no proper constitutional guidelines through which the actions of government can be regulated and appraised. There seem, therefore, to be no clear limits to the power of government, which comes to appear increasingly arbitrary, tyrannical and careless of individual rights. Indeed, Mr Johnson echoes Lord Hailsham in his assertion that the British philosophy of "liberal collectivism", "always runs the risk of sliding towards a centralization of power which points towards the totalitarian condition".

The greater part of the book is devoted to an analysis of "the logic of relationships" between the various elements of the constitution. It is the activity of the House of Commons which particularly arouses his scorn; for, like Barry's Gothic palace in which it is housed, the Commons is "a gigantic stage set, meant for ritual and the acting out of an unending play. But it is not meant for business and management of the practical affairs of life, at any rate not in our present world". Recent attempts at reform of the Commons have been "naive" and without serious effect, because they have not seriously sought to alter the balance of power between Parliament and Executive which in turn results from the "adversary system" predominating in British politics. "Few systems of government", claims Mr Johnson, "can have institutionalized the role of opposing men who, by constitution or Bill of Rights must be either a partisan measure, or so vague as to be nearly worthless.

What, after all, does the term "constitutional" mean in the British context? Addressing the House of Commons in February 1932 in order to defend the "agreement to differ" among Cabinet ministers, Mr Baldwin said:

> The historian can tell you probably perfectly clearly what the constitutional practice of this country was at any given period in the past, but it would be very difficult for a living writer to tell you at any given period in his lifetime what the Constitution of this country is in all respects, and for this reason, that at almost any given moment of our lifetime there may be one practice called "Constitutional" which is falling into desuetude and there may be another practice which is creeping into use but which is not yet called "Constitutional". There may be changes on the horizon to be seen only by some man of vision.

In this country, surely, constitutional conventions refer to a set of rules which arise out of specific political and social circumstances. When these circumstances change, the content and meaning of constitutional maxims will also change.

Mr Johnson seeks to use "constitutional" not "in a narrow and technical sense; I use this term to refer broadly to the conditions on which political authority in its various manifestations is constituted and exercised". The *root* [my italics] of the political difficulty", he argues, "is to be found in a contention that much of the British Constitution has lost its vitality. It has become merely formal, still adapted to the sustaining of myths, but for this very reason unable to contribute effectively to the establishment and maintenance of authority."

We have to ask why it is that authority is under threat, and whether so serious a challenge to our accustomed way of doing things can be met merely by a restructuring of the rules regulating our political institutions. And then it becomes clear that the root of the difficulty is to be found in factors which lie beyond Mr Johnson's constitutionalism. For our political institutions seem less the cause of our troubles than the product of conditions of social life which are gradually passing away.

It is because these institutions have failed to come to terms with new social relationships—with the breakdown of deference, the growth of regional and national feeling, the new status of organized labour and the growth in the power of interest groups—that they stand discredited. The contrast between the rhetoric of politicians and the reality of social conditions has led, therefore, to a progressive devitalization of the language of politics such that it becomes impossible to fashion a new consensus.

It is the challenge of adapting our institutions to changing social conditions, of drawing out the energies and skill of the working population, that is as central and vital for us as the struggle for the franchise was to the nineteenth century. One may indeed draw a parallel, as the Bullock Report on Industrial Democracy has done, between industrial and political democracy. The constitution survived in the nineteenth century because it was able to accommodate the political changes demanded by the ongoing processes of social change. So also today, it lies with politicians to construct a new agenda of politics, which, by re-establishing the basis of community, will end a period of social disorganization that is both extensive and profound. Only then will there be the foundations for a new constitutional settlement. When that happens, Mr Johnson's persuasive contribution to our constitutional thinking will come fully into its own.

City fathers

By R. J. B. Morris

JOHN GYFORD:
Local Politics in Britain
193pp. Croom Helm. £6.50.

John Gyford's study of British local politics—primarily local government politics—is a short book and in some respects even a thin one. He seems on the whole very pessimistic about the future of the local councillor and, perhaps as a result of his experience of both sides, equivocal about the relationship between councillors and officers; yet on the other hand he has not allowed his present specialism (he is Lecturer in Town Planning, University College London) to dominate his approach to what constitutes the public attitudes to their local authorities or to what seems to be called these days "the stuff of politics".

Undoubtedly there is a place for the study of local politics alongside the traditional studies of organizations, structures and management methods, not to mention the economics, of local authorities. The reorganization of 1974, of course, required totally fresh analyses of the organizations, structures and so on: the changes in essential political character, disregarding the then current swing of party advantage, were substantial too, but they were not complete overnight. In the sense that the formal side of reorganization was, and some years must pass before the strength of the cultural effect of the events of the early 1970s on local politics as such can begin to be properly measured. "Indeed", says Mr Gyford at one point, "it may be that ultimately corporate management and non-party councillors are mutually incompatible." Maybe, but in the meantime each participant in the system will continue to judge postulations such as this in the light of personal experience.

Mr Gyford is not alone in stressing how different is each local authority in its actual working despite its conformity to a standard formal pattern. It is when, largely in his chapter "Party Politics", he goes down to dealing in detailed local examples that he is at his best. For one thing, to talk about Lincoln or Liverpool (both of which he does) is more immediately meaningful and vivid than, (to quote at random), a statement such as "Harrison and Norton concluded that in general party Groups were more likely to throw up 'a group of influential members than a single autocrat'". It is therefore disappointing that more of the space is not devoted to specific examples. The Maud Committee on the Management of Local Government commissioned a study of political and administrative practice in local authorities which "is notable for the very large number of individual examples which it cites and for the often very tentative nature of the generalizations and observations which it draws from them". Mr Gyford's book tends too far the other way, which is unfortunate because it detracts to a degree from the impact of a worthwhile, readable introduction to the subject which deserves attention.

The art of independence

By Igor Vinogradoff

MICHAEL SHEMYAKIN (Editor) :
Apollon—77
An Anthology of Russian Literature and Art
388pp with 300 illustrations. Available from Michael Shemyakin, 85 Avenue du Général Leclerc, Paris 14e. 350 fr.

IGOR GOLOMSHTOK and ALEXANDER GLEZER :
Unofficial Art from the Soviet Union
172pp. Secker and Warburg. £7.95.

The crux of independent Russian art, whether it be called unofficial, dissident or mutinous, lies in the fact that by official definition it has no right to exist in the Soviet Union at all.

The Soviet Union is . . . a "religious" state, professing a unique, militant and intolerant "religion" —Marxism-Leninism, whose embodiment in literature and art is Socialist Realism, (i.e the glorification of the State and Industry and of its rulers). Whoever denies the dogmas of Socialist Realism is deemed to reject the state religious ideology in favour of a bourgeois philosophy—which is both apostasy and a crime.

This quotation from Alexander Glezer's essay in *Unofficial Art from the Soviet Union* sums up the position very well and Igor Golomshtok completes the picture:

The whole of artistic life in the Soviet Union, from top to bottom, is strictly controlled by three basic institutions: the Union of Soviet Artists, the Academy of Arts and the Ministry of Culture.

Between them these three institutions control all art schools, art publications, museums and exhibitions, and see to it that all members of the Union of Soviet Artists subscribe to the principles and practice of socialist realism, thus they are expelled from the union if they do not act on them (this happens quite often) and that they alone have the right to produce, exhibit and sell works of art.

It is within this unprecedented system of frozen, jellified status quo that all independent art and writing in the Soviet Union must be considered. Those unorthodox or dissident artists who break away in search of independence may show their works privately, but they may not exhibit publicly and they are breaking the law if they sell, especially to foreigners, because this involves illegal deals in foreign currency. That they do frequently so sell in order to keep themselves alive exposes them to heavy penalties. They risk prosecution as "parasites" and relegation to forced labour if they do not have a recognized occupation; independent art is not a recognized occupation. They may be charged with foreign propaganda or with pornography if they draw their inspiration from foreign masters or if their subject-matter offends the touchy puritanism of the official world.

It is no wonder that the independent-minded in Soviet Russia tend to waver between two extremes. They may paint in an unorthodox manner but keep their subject-matter and their treatment as quietly inoffensive as possible like Great Rabin and the Leningrad school; they may thus escape active persecution and be able to live unobtrusively by their work. On the other hand, they may break out with a wild and revel in a rowdy rebel world; this is often true of writers and artists who have emigrated to the West; their reaction is healthy and is rarely tainted by commercialism.

Unofficial Art perforce represents the first approach, because it is restricted to work done in the Soviet Union; its exponents take pains to point out that "this opposition movement is supposed not to be political, Solzhenitsyn and that lot are the ones for that" (*vitupérations* against or caricatures). (Penguin, *Apollon—77*, approach is very different, all the more so because it contains the work of some fifty contributors (including thirty visual artists) all differ, though the book bears the symbol of the Leningrad avant-garde artists on its final page. All that they have in common is a taste for freedom from the tyranny from which most of them have escaped. (Material by authors domiciled in the Soviet Union is published without their knowledge; this is stated on the title-page.) *Apollon* is much less inhibited and more powerful than *Unofficial Art* just because it consists almost entirely of work first published, if not actually executed, *outside* Soviet Russia, in the so-called Third Emigration of today.

The poetry and prose make an explosion of the most diverse talents and effects—Rabelaisian fun and nostalgia for the indestructible beauty of old Saint Petersburg, effective satire against Brezhnev as well as Stalin, fragments of lyrical beauty and old-fashioned patriotism, haunting horrors and yearning Christian faith.

Perhaps the most striking characteristic of all is the irresistible sense of fun which recurs in Bakhchanyan's "Battle of Sorcs", curiously illustrated by Shemyakin, who often seems to be borrowing from Edward Lear; in the sinister list of the 130 Socialist Soviet republics of the future which over the whole world from "Britanskaya SSR" in Bangladesh and issue decrees banning everything from false teeth to chance encounters; in the report of Brezhnev's speech in praise of Pepsi-Cola which is interrupted eleven times by "thunderous and prolonged applause"; in Limanov's "We are national heroes" (a joke against Gagarin the cosmonaut).

The sense of fun recurs in Kuzminsky (photographed in three naked poses) and Gavrilchik (photographed as another Rasputin), reaches a climax as a macabre accompaniment to Mamleyev's six occultist stories where death and resurrection are dramatized alongside an idiot tattooed with a portrait of Spinoza, and where the toilet paper is labelled "Pravda" and "Russkaya Mysl", while Shemyakin's grimly witty monochrome drawings illustrate the theme; his animals seem inspired by Old Believer manuscripts of the Apocalypse, grinning skulls line up with phallic exhibitions and strange conjunctions between human heads and fishes enliven the scene. (Some of these fantasies have offended the conservative Russian émigré critics in Paris and *Apollon* has retaliated by putting their paper "Russkaya Mysl" (Russian thought) where they think it belongs.) Hilarious fun merges into mourning; there are Okhapkin's noble lines in praise of Saint Petersburg, city of bronze and granite, alongside Shemyakin's splendid photograph of Ivan Ostrov and superb engraving of St Isaac's, beyond the quays. It follows another photograph of a Krivulin and Okhapkin, their backs against a bare brick studio wall.

This brings one to the picture section of *Apollon*. Shemyakin's brilliant illustrations and the seventy-six excellent photographs make up half this part; here, the work of thirty artists, is interesting and many good.

The major figures of three generations dominate the display—Filonov, Sveshnikov and Shemyakin. The book opens with a moving tribute to Filonov, who died of starvation in 1941; he had been refused ration cards during the siege of Leningrad, because of nonconformity. His art is very little known in the West; only two exhibitions of his work have ever been shown. It is of a very high order. He is represented by six full pages of drawings, all reproduced in marvellous detail. They show nothing but silent drinkers staring fixedly into the void and a pair of cupids in full song. The drawing is austerely excellent, conveying an overwhelming impression of a resigned despair.

Sveshnikov's twelve "camp drawings" get only half a page each. They derive from his eight years in the camps with some terrible visions of psychiatric hospitals. Drawing and composition are very fine, with a great feeling of space whether it be snow-covered Siberian taiga" with tiny figures fighting or dancing, struggling with thick loads, helped or hindered by this wretched little dog, or vast interiors of lofty prison halls, peopled with sleeping or dying creature-creatures hanging from hooks, miserable creatures on cell beds, creatures being scientifically tortured by fiends in white hospital coats.

Shemyakin has contributed one-third of the pictorial material to this book—some first-class photographs, some eighty wire and line illustrations and some unforgettably frightful prison scenes. It is the giant who has financed and edited *Apollon* and he is not yet thirty-five years old. He was the expulsion from the Soviet Union in 1971 he had held five exhibitions there; all but two were closed down within a few hours or days. Since leaving he has held ten exhibitions, from Paris to Tokyo, and he is said to have sold every picture he has shown.

Apollon 77 picks up its tale from Apollon 1910, one of the best almanacks or literary artistic anthologies of the pre-revolutionary Petersburg renaissance. It far surpasses its predecessor or indeed any other anthology or almanac ever published in Rus in even three of Pushkin's day.

"In the workers' dining room" by Shalya (Sholom Shwartz). A drawing taken from Apollon—77.

No hope for the Kadets

By Harry Shukman

WILLIAM G. ROSENBERG :
Liberals in the Russian Revolution
The Constitutional Democratic Party, 1917-1921
534pp. Princeton University Press. £20.70 (limited paperback edition, £7.50).

Among the most enduring ideas about modern Russian history is that of Russian liberalism as the flower of Westernized Russian thought, as the noble vain ambition of enlightened men to adopt Western parliamentary democratic principles of social and individual autonomy in the unpromising semi-Asiatic environment of Imperial Russia. Unquestioning devotion to the idea of the rule of law, of social equality before the law (a notion so alien that a German word had to be found to express it) admiration of English parliamentary tradition and the English genius for composing social conflict reasonably and moderately; envy of the French who venerate intelligence; admiration of American economic efficiency—these were some of the attitudes held dear by Russian liberals, in contrast to their horror and exasperation at the typically Russian antithesis, a state which was contemptuous of legal process, a society in which the dominant mode of judicial exchange was that of administrative caprice, a society in which repression was consistently resorted to instead of vigorous argument and compromise.

In such a society, intelligence, or autonomous thinking, has no place or is at best exploited for the benefit of the despotic regime, or is relegated to the status of idiot. In place of efficiency and rational economic activity, Russia typically exhibited sloth, low productivity, the makeshift and slapdash. Thus the liberal assessment, though they were not alone in it, for some of their views were shared by conservatives, anarchists, and even Bolsheviks. But they could claim the moral right.

In William Rosenberg's view, the efforts of the Russian liberals were doomed precisely because the soil in which liberalism was planted, namely, the Russian mind, was unpropitious for its growth. Liberalism was too exotic a plant, fundamental conditions and, like other political doctrines that were transplanted there from the West, it underwent a genetic mutation in transit. It appears that the same influence that distorted Marxism in Russia, that is, the influence of statism, also afflicted Russian liberalism.

The liberals' commitment to the principle of national self-determination—the self-determination of the non-Russian nationalities—was distinctly shaky (as was that of the Bolsheviks). Those Kadet (Constitutional Democrat) leaders who spoke out in the Duma for Jewish rights were thereupon "Jews." With few exceptions, Kadets firmly supported the notion of a united, indivisible Russian empire; they vigorously opposed federalism, or any similar state structure which might weaken the empire as a political unit. In Russia, where the habits of authoritarianism had the strongest roots of any institution, liberals thought first of power and last of reform, they deferred to their right-wing allies in the civil war, the White generals, when they should have appealed to the masses in the name of [illegible]

In effect, this theme, which depicts the liberals as throwing overboard all their cherished beliefs in the desperate search for authority or power exercised through army elements of the old regime, places them on the same political level as the Bolsheviks, who towards the end of 1917 openly relinquished the doctrine of ripening conditions and opted for the seizure of naked power.

Liberals in the Russian Revolution is nevertheless a work of value for the density of its research, the richness of its materials, and the thoroughness and range of view brought to bear. It is well produced, with a full bibliography and the author writes in a straightforward, businesslike manner (from which he allows himself an embarrassing lapse in his preface). From archives at Columbia and Stanford, together with the wealth of secondary material available on this subject, Rosenberg has assembled a picture of the activities of the Kadets, of particular value for the civil war period, and which it will be difficult to surpass.

The politics of music

By George Steiner

JACQUES ATTALI :
Bruits
Essai sur l'économie politique de la musique
304pp. Paris : Presses Universitaires de France. 49fr.

Theories about the current crisis of communication and intelligibility tend to be as stale and inchoate as the material which they try to order. Perhaps one could cut through the fog by putting forward a fairly brutal approximation: what characterizes the present condition in the arts, in language, in constructs of behaviour is simply the fact that *anything goes*. Art must comprise, must include within its conventions of acceptance and internal development, a pile of burlap sacking in a corner of the Tate Gallery, or a heap of driftwood culled from a stream. Music encodes random noises. Behaviour, both individually and collectively, reaches out towards fantasies or nightmares of total possibility. Anything can be uttered or written publicly.

Start a book by proclaiming that "western knowledge attempts, for twenty-five centuries, to see the world. It has not understood that the world must not be looked at, but heard. The world is not read, it is listened to." Or start it (as have done a score of pundits in the new movements of psychic-carnal liberation) by declaring that the world must be neither viewed nor hearkened to, but touched, felt, enfolded in the ecstasy of the body. Or announce, if you prefer, that "western consciousness must return to the primacy of scent, as it obtained among its animal forebears. The world is not read, it is smelt." Reveal, in italics, that "the entire nineteenth-century theory of political economy was comprised in the concert-hall of the eighteenth century and announced the politics of the twentieth century". State as a fact (and without, of course, providing any evidence or source) that "in antique societies the gods had three main powers: to wage war, to make the faithful starve, and to register or record sounds". Profess the following *sequitur*: "Still today, death is everywhere in music, and thus it is no accident if many great musicians have chosen physical death (Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix, Jim Morrison, Otis Redding) or institutional death (the Beatles, the Stones)." Buttress this proposition by explaining that music comes of primal sacrifice and that its original function was a "canalisation de la violence essentielle". Take it as proven that music no longer wishes to communicate with the listener and that being a *non-sens* it is now the source of silence. Reiterate your Copernican finding that "noise is a weapon; music is the formalization, the domestication, the ritualization of the use of this weapon in the millenium of ritual murder, exalting the imaginary". Foil any possible objection by saying that you are pursuing an ideal not of "interdisciplinary" discourse or analysis, but of "creative indiscipline". And hasten your opus to the Presses Universitaires de France. You will be published at once.

Lamentably, to be sure, there being, apparently, no editor or proof-reader worthy of creative indiscipline, the results are a *sottisier* of error and mendacity which would have enchanted Bouvard and Pécuchet. English-language titles are massacred ("The Andaman Islander's"). Weber is confused with Anton Webern. We are referred to the metaphysics of noise in "the economic dilemma". We are told several times about a Viennese master called Malher. We are given as a fact that Elisabeth Schwarzkopf agreed to record under the name of Kirsten Flagstad (a statement which has, in fact, a very complex incident dimly in view and which a cursory reference to Rolf Liberman in no way clears up). The bibliography is not only an absolute scandal so far as literals go ("Lehnisches nachgelassene schriften, psykalischen, mathenischen und technischen"), but, what matters far more, is regard to honesty. Many of the books cited are not included, and there is a single entry under T. W. Adorno for a book which draws on Adorno's *Klangfiguren*, *Dissonanzen*, *Einleitung in die Musiksoziologie*, *Quasi una Fantasia* and the Wagner, Mahler and Alban Berg monographs at almost every point. But no matter: do all this and you will find yourself the guru of the month in Paris and wherever the structuralist-semiotic writ runs, you will see your ebullient visage beaming from the pages of *Time* magazine as that of an inspired prophet, and you will rejoice in a bestseller.

But the point is neither Jacques Attali and his particular book, nor the collapse of minimal care at the Presses Univeraitaires: the point is that of arbitrariness rampant. Replace any of the propositions I have quoted with something equally porcupinoy and comprehensive ("All music reflects prehistoric man's ambivalent relation to the penguin, in which he saw both a prey and his own parodiastic emble. Thus Vaughan Williams's *Antarctic symphony* . . .") and a self-certifying, seemingly coherent cascade of argument will follow. "Jouons avec l'idée" says M Attali over and over. The categorizing terms are the most fashionable: "ludic" to signify ritually playful, *piéger* to mean the entrapment into which all fine impulses stumble when the bourgeoisie gets its oily hands on them, and, above all, *indisciplinée*, in their framework, of public, representative performance, are paradigms of the ordered energies and rule-governed stabilities of the absolutist and bourgeois hegemony. With the crises of alienation, population and overproduction on the current phase of capitalist collapse, it becomes imperative to stifle human outrage. Thus music becomes bureaucratic in order to reduce to silence "ceux qui contestent". This same triadic pattern explains the changes from the wandering musician or *jongleur*, to the professional orchestral executant, and now to the long-playing record and cassette.

At every point—a notion first argued by Spengler—there is a fundamental correlation between musical phenomena and the contemporary modes of spiritual and economic exchange. The analysis of complex mathematical functions by Fourier exactly parallels that decomposition of noise into elementary sounds which is the function of the large symphonic orchestra. The modern cycle of excessive production, surplus stocks and artificial demand precisely mirrors the electronics of pop music. Approximately from Vivaldi to Brahms, before Marxism becomes a force, "la musique devient donc, pour la bourgeoisie, le substitut à la religion, l'incarnation d'une humanité idéale, l'image d'un temps abstrait, a-conflictuel, harmonieux qui se déroule et s'achève d'une histoire prévisible et maîtrisable". Consider the erosion of each of these counters of order, and you will grasp the coming of atonality, of the Schoenbergian revolution, and of the noise-industry in jazz, rock and pop (here M Attali follows closely on Adorno's famous analysis in the *Philosophie der neuen Musik*).

But even since Adorno wrote and Webern composed, much has happened, especially in the technologies of musical recording, storage and reproduction. A world in which anyone can assemble his own musical history and record library by taping whatever is performed or diffused publicly, in which techniques of splicing and audio-montage can, at will, alter the formal components of any sound-genre, in which voice, instruments, electronic synthesis can coexist at the same executive instant, does pose new and fascinating issues. And these, as Adorno foretold and M Attali demonstrates, are at the crucial junction of political, sociological, fiscal and aesthetic structures.

Though he fails to pursue them thoroughly, M Attali does start up a number of intriguing hares. Tracing back electric recording and storage of ordered sound to Tainter's 1886 "graphophone", he shows that the use of phonograph records for music, as opposed to speech, developed almost accidentally. He has suggestive things to say about the exceedingly ambiguous area of "aural" copyright, of the ways in which the law, which in France also dates back to 1886, has tried to define the rights of the composer and performer on material now susceptible of unlimited and private "capture" and reproduction (the tape-recorder and cassette have formidably complicated the whole issue). M Attali gives a suggestive sketch, reminiscence of Walter Benjamin's studies of the Second Empire, of how the street musicians of the 1830s, with their own peculiar instrumental resources and marginal legal status, evolved into the *café concs* (*cafés concerts*) of the mid-century and, later on, into the *chansonniers* of the modern cabaret or music-hall. From this complex change will stem the star, the *vedette* and idol of modern light music and song. He touches on the utterly absorbing theme of public attempts to curb and control noise-levels, particularly in respect of musical performance. These attempts go back as far as a law of April 1784. Today, in the ever more bullying ambience of electronically projected and amplified kitsch, the entire issue has become at once urgent and intractable.

On a related point, M Attali rightly evokes the psychological-political questions posed by the introduction of muzak in 1922, the piping of taped music into factories, airport lounges, hotel lobbies, clinics and public parks (he should have noted that in American cities this dulcet hum, particularly in lonely or enclosed spaces such as lifts, is meant to reassure, to diminish the terror of potential assault). And M Attali is surely right when he connects the "repeatability" of music made easy and economically advantageous by current reproductive means with the comparable "dynamic monotone" of industrial and bureaucratic processes in our society (again, the clue to this idea lies in Benjamin's famous essay on the new photographic reproducibility of all art).

But so often a promising argument is either dropped or marred by facile, sweeping dicta. It is vulgar nonsense to assert that the notorious "orchestras" compelled to perform at Dachau and in other concentration camps somehow prove the contention that the musician in present "at all places of ritual murder, where his formidably ambiguous role refers back to the essence of music: sacrifice, music and scapegoat form an indestructible totality". It is almost equally silly to conclude a brief look at the dilemma of noise-control with the axiom that public authorities are not interested in quiet but in imposing a politically harmless buzz of voices or in making cries of political acclaim recuperable. What shred of evidence is there to back the statement that music had a social and politically subversive function in the Dionysian and Mithraic cults of ancient Rome (a statement made the more suspect by the throw-away line "Il y eut à Rome une célèbre affaire qui finit par des centaines de condamnations à mort")? What value is there in solemnly affirming that phonograph records represent a "stockage du temps" (a "time-inventory")? If you does not add that each and every semiotic use of the preterite—in writing, in painting, in monumental designation—does exactly the same?

More is the pity, because the themes touched on by *Bruits* are, indeed, of the most intense philosophic, political and sociological interest. It is very probable that in Western culture music is now, and increasingly, occupying the inner and outer spaces formerly occupied by literary speech. The record-shelves in the modern flat tend to take precisely the room and psychological focus which formerly belonged to the private library. More and more literate men and women find themselves turning to music for the repose, for the impulses of hope, for the intimations of rational structure which they once found in books. Or, and this is an exceedingly complex phenomenon, they find that they are able to read for any length of time only if there is music in the background. Far more than literature, music is today the major "trans-national" and generational bond; the hit-tune, the favourite classic, reproduced million-fold, crosses every frontier and gives respective age-groups their touchstone of mutual recognition. The reasons for this musicalization of sensibility, doubtless, lie very deep: in the hunger for substitute forms of religiosity or "mutness stare", in the insight that unlike books, which are read alone, which cut one off in their imperative of attention, music can be listened to socially, that it offers the attractions of simultaneous intimate and plentiful or collective emotion. But whatever the reasons, the revolution of sentiment brought on by the gramophone, the radio, the television set, the tape-recorder and the ever more refined instruments of musical emission—such as quadrophonic sound—have profoundly altered the relative "mass" of verbal and aural literacy and response in our world.

Yet at the very same time, this alteration has generated a paradoxical conservatism. According to the best available estimates, some 95 per cent of serious music reproduced on records, played on radio, performed in the concert hall, chamber-music room or opera, is *music of the past*. Neither literature nor the visual arts know any such proportion. The living musician is fighting for 5 per cent (or less of the total time and technology of acoustic access. This is a fantastically distorted situation. In part, but only in part, it is itself founded on the widely proclaimed but little-understood argument that modern music is incomprehensible and even aurally offensive, that no composer since Mahler has furnished ordinary listeners with the necessary wonder of melody and emotively satisfying harmonic structure. To the general ear, we are told, post-Schoenbergian atonatory or synthetic modes of musical utterance are alien and hostile. Hence the record-company's or impresario's or performer's decision to provide the hundredth version of a Mozart, Beethoven or Tchaikovsky score in preference to something new and as yet unknown.

Adorno was among the first to attempt an analysis of this bizarre circumstance and of its effects on composition and society. But his suggestions, remarkably prelimnary, and the imbalance has become far more drastic than it was even in the Vienna of Schoenberg, Berg and Webern. It is, now, by no means certain that the esoteric works of today will become the classics of tomorrow, in the sense of the evolution of taste which transformed the status of, say, the late Beethoven compositions or of Brahms (a musician regarded as forbiddingly abstract in his day).

And the problem of noise is a gripping one. Will music, as some contemporary composers claim, "incorporate" the pandemonium of the urban-industrial setting and give it a translation into codes of meaning and acceptability? Will the pressures of noise on the modern ear (the megalopolis of today emits noise-masses on a twenty-four hour basis) reduce all but the most clamorously competitive of music—the howl of electric guitars and rock—to a special, almost "silent" status? In other words, will one resort to classical music in order to experience modes of quiet, of near-silence (John Cage's music would, in this regard, be a prophetic trial)? On all these problems, rigorous thinking is needed, and the fruitful inter not "in-disciplinary" collaboration of musicology, sociology and philosophy.

Even as it stands, *Bruits* raises a further general question. M Attali is one of François Mitterrand's economic advisers. What English economist or civil servant after Keynes would conceive of, let alone write and publish, a treatise on the metaphysics and political sociology of music? Where, in the present English intellectual climate, would one find the urgent originality of intellectual query, the range of aesthetic-political reference, which *Bruits* takes for granted? On the hand, what respectable English author, editor and publisher would launch a book so marred by flashiness, by modish presence, by shoddy research and plain error? Is intensity of and commitment to ideological debate, to the life of ideas, bought at the price of histrionic facility? The answer must obviously be No (the best of Adorno's work on the sociology and philosophy of music and the mass-media proves the case). But seen, respectively, from Paris and from London, the question looks undecided, and the gap widens.

TLS Commentary

The fashion for faerie

Can the methods of criticism be applied to fantasy without owlishness? Does any fantasy of the present century come up to the scandards of serious criticism? Readers of specialist journals devoted to science fiction, or of the already considerable body of criticism on *The Lord of the Rings*, or of Colin Manlove's decisive *Modern Fantasy*, will know that the answer to both questions is apparently affirmative.

The current issue of *Mosaic* (X/2 Winter 1977) is given over to "Faerie, Fantasy and Pseudo-mediaevalia in Twentieth-Century Literature" in the belief that "in recent times, writers, and some artists in other media, have turned increasingly to the 'otherliness' of these elements, and used them with increasing intensity to try to interpret to them a world whose unotherliness has been its own dismantling". The journal's policy is to allow the quality of the work submitted to determine the coverage; so that we have here two articles on Tolkien and no fewer than three on T. H. White, but none on Eddison or Lewis or Peake or Hesse.

Frank Bergmann's useful but rather heavy study of the sources of Tolkien's "On Faerie Stories" traces "The Roots of Tolkien's Tree" back through Macdonald and Fouqué to within sight of Paracelsus; but without much psychological penetration. More interesting is Anthony Ugolnik's "Wordhord Onleac", which develops the idea (drawn from Elizabeth Kirk) that "Tolkien's linguistic aesthetic is fundamental to his art". *The Lord of the Rings* "presents us with a rich genealogical procession of names, for the name is the ultimate noun, particularised to the utmost degree, descriptive and containing within itself an innate power". Professor Ugolnik's characterization of the various languages that Tolkien deploys is sensitive and acute, and informative even in a field now rather fully worked. But his approach is perhaps not quite medieval enough: when all is said and done Tolkien's work is narrative, to be judged for its narrative qualities.

Of the papers on White, John Crane's general survey finds a recurrent theme in relinquishment of power, for which he thinks fantasy an apt vehicle. Many fantasies indeed have this theme; but not, surely, because of "the very unlikelihood of anyone willingly relinquishing whatever power he is lucky enough to be able to wield". François Gallix, in "T. H. White et la Légende du Roi Arthur", talks of White's anachronism without any suggestion of the subtle, deliberate art that went into his shadings of period into era, dialectal into non-standard into pre-standard speech. Colin Manlove makes no such mistake, in what is easily the best of the White papers. He describes with admirable precision: "Unexpectedness is here part of the effect: the exotic and the common, caboges and buttered worts, lie side by side, heightening their identities by their juxtaposition; and while the theme of the castle is aspiration, the modes in which this is realized continually surprise". But he also values his subjects' ideas at as little as they merit. Altogether, the comparison of White and Malory, though a little unfair to the latter, deserves pondering by all modernists. (True medievalists already recognize White's claims.)

Colin Manlove also contributes an invaluable preliminary survey on E. Nesbit ("Fantasy as Wishe-Contest"): sympathetic but cool, in which he finds her fanciful rather than imaginative, more Cleveland then Donne. Then there is M. C. Bradbrook's fine astringent analysis of Yeats's gestures to his inhistorical Ireland: the only piece in the issue – and this is interesting in itself – with much political bite. She traces (what so many have been unwilling to do) how Yeats, myth-maker in his later years, deliberately cultivated ambiguity, seeking for the sovereignty of poetry while oscillating still into self-deceptions, or retreating "into a heavy armour-plating of his own old mythologies, a buried King Arthur, a Once and Future King". An article on J. C. Powys by G. Wilson Knight positively hums with emotional power, but casts a somewhat fitful light on its notoriously elusive subject. This may be due to the distractions of a more important topic, the "seraphic ideal", or simply that what is of value in Powys does not lend itself to systematic exposition.

Anthony Riley's "Jaufré Rudel in Alfred Döblin's last novel *Hamlet*" may persuade some audacious publisher to think of translations of this neglected author. (Think of the current appeal of a "Humorous treatment of the theory that the whole 'system' of troubadours and the Courts of Love were nothing less than a medieval women's liberation movement".)

In his thoughtful exposure of the structure of ideas underlying Ursula Le Guin's *Earthsea* trilogy, T. A. Shippey seems too solemn at first. But in the end he convinces one that the solemnity may be Mrs Le Guin's; and that she really does demand of us that we reconsider our use of such words as "magic" and "name"—though not, surely, that she "takes 'In the beginning was the word' more seriously and more literally than do many modern theologians." An issue bristling with points of interest concludes with P. G. Stanwood's gesture towards an enormous subject, "Fantasy and Fairy Tale in Twentieth-Century Opera".

I left over Fred Wagner's "*Restitutio in Integrum*: Rudolf Borchardt and the Middle Ages", which raises (albeit in a peripheral fashion) a question unasked by the others: What new cultural tradition could do justice to what was of value in medieval fantasy? Or, more immediately: what is the land of faerie to mean to our own century? The tendency to dismiss it from serious consideration has cut us off, almost, from what previous generations found in fairyland. Such a discontinuity presents real dangers: whatever faerie expressed is unlikely to disappear, just because we prefer not to think about it. Looked at in this way, some of our medievalizing writers and fairytale tellers acquire a new importance. And the present issue of *Mosaic*, even, may have its bit part to play against those modern Alcuins, whose sole question about fantasy is always *Quid Hinnieldus cum Christo?* (What has Faerie to do with us?)

Winifrede Fowler

Britannia rule the waves: effigies of the British royal family modelled in sand on the beach at Bournemouth in 1937 by one J. Suchomlin: "only sand water and colour used" is printed below the figures. This extraordinary manifestation of loyalty is from *One Hundred and Forty-Four Picture Postcards of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and her Family*, compiled by Mary Dunkin (52pp. Omnibus. Paperback, £3.95), an imaginative contribution to Jubilee year containing vintage items from the Queen's babyhood onwards, from nostalgic sepia, doll's prams and tricycles, to brilliant colour: corgis and Gartered magnificence. The postcards can be cut out and used, as a gesture of patriotism and parsimony: writing out at 2.47p a card, considerably less than the postage, it could be the best value in jubilee souvenirs so far.

Fifty years on . . .

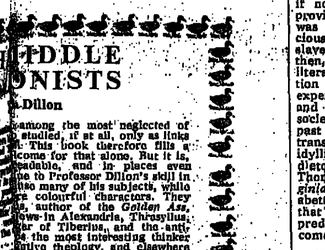
Virginia Woolf's To the Lighthouse *was reviewed by Arthur McDowall in the TLS of May 5, 1927:*

Each of Mrs Woolf's novels has inspired a lively curiosity as to the next. One wondered what would follow *Mrs Dalloway*; and its successor, with certain points of likeness, is yet a different thing. It is still more different from most other stories. . . . It is a reflective book, with an ironical or wistful questioning of life and reality. Somehow this steals into the pages, whether there is a sunny peace in the garden, or Mrs Ramsay is interrupted in a fairy-tale, or a couple is late for dinner, so that one is inclined to say that this question of the meaning of things, however masked, is not only the essence but the real protagonist in the story. Perhaps this is one reason why you are less conscious of Mrs Woolf's characters than they are of each other. They have an acute consciousness which reminds you of the people in Henry James, but with a difference. The characters of Henry James are so absorbed in each other that they have no problem beyond the truth, or otherwise, of their relations; and they are so intensely seen as persons that they are real. But the people in Mrs Woolf's book seem to be looking through each other at some farther question; and, although they interact vividly, they are not completely real. No doubt, as Lily Briscoe the painter thinks in the novel, to know people in outline is one way of knowing them. And they are seen here in the way they are meant to be seen. But the result is that, while you know quite well the kind of people represented in the story, they lack something as individuals. Mr Ramsay, certainly—masterful and helpless, egotist and hero—does leave a deep mark at the end. His wife, with her beauty, her sympathy and swift decided actions, is more of a piece though her personality is subtly pervasive even when she has ceased to live. But there is a significant emptiness in the parenthesis which (surely with a slip in punctuation) announces her death:

> Mr Ramsay stumbling along a passage stretched his arms out in the dark morning, but Mrs Ramsay having died rather suddenly the night before he stretched his arms out. They remained empty.

Here Mrs Woolf's detachment was a little strained, and, in fact, transitional part of the book is its strongest part.

One comes back, however, to the charm and pleasure of her design. It is carried through with a subtlety. Every little thread is there: Mr Ramsay writing a book, Mr Briscoe struggling with her picture, the lights in the bay, the parallel of the absurdity—is woven in one texture, which has piquancy and power by turns. A sad book in the main, but with all its entertainment, it is one to return to; for it has that power of leaving a vision which is so often found, perhaps, in novels and in a short story.



"The middle Pianists" ... ancient philosophers ... between Plato and ... great gap, and ... in addition, surely ... entertaining. That ... presentation, and ... not great philosophers ... include the Stoics ... Philo, one of the ... most famous as the ... pupil Hippolytus ... is Albinus, a pleasant ... too the reader ... similarities with ... whole thing is diffuse ...

"All who formerly ... fusing and obscure ...

among the most neglected of ... studied, if at all, only as ... This book therefore fills a ... come for that alone. But it is ... readable, and in places even ... to Professor Dillon's skill in ... lives in Alexandria, Thessalonica, ... or of Tiberius, and the anti- ... the most interesting thinker ... active theology, and elsewhere ... being struck continually by ... ought, though the spirit of the ...
Pamela Huby, *TLS*

... seminal area of thought con- ... profoundly grateful."
W. B. Stanford, *Irish Times*

Southern lights

By Harold Beaver

LOUIS D. RUBIN, Jr and C. HUGH HOLMAN (Editors):
Southern Literary Study Problems and Possibilities
235pp. Chapel Hill. University of North Carolina Press. $12.50.

LOUIS D. RUBIN, Jr:
William Elliott Shoots a Bear Essays on the Southern Literary Imagination
279pp. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press. $10.

The advent of a Southerner, flaunting his agrarian background, to the White House, signals the re-entry of that vast region, after more than a century's ostracism, into the political mainstream of American life. Four years earlier, a literary conference had been held in the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to confront the whole problem of regionalism. That confrontation has now become relevant on the national stage. What is a Southerner? What is Southern literature? What is the South?

By the mid-nineteenth century there was a fair consensus. A Southerner was a kind of swaggering, military braggadocio. Parodies were rife, particularly by maverick Southerners, such as Mark Twain's Colonel Grangerford or Poe's Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith: "He was, perhaps, six feet in height, and of a presence singularly commanding. There was an *air distingué* pervading the whole man, which spoke of high breeding, and hinted at high birth." But what lay behind that façade of glossy hair, unimaginable whiskers and brilliant teeth? Nothing, was the answer. "They are mere bladders of conceit", wrote Emerson in his journal:

> The young Southerner . . . has conversed so much with rifles, horses and dogs, that he has become himself a rifle, a horse and a dog, and in civil educated company, where anything human is going forward, he is dumb and unhappy. Like an Indian in a country of the Appalachians. To this colonial core was added the south-west cotton country of Mississippi and Alabama (Faulkner's Deep South) and the Creole delta country of Louisiana. One answer, then, to Southern literature, is a sense of location and enduring devotion to place—as George Washington Cable was devoted to New Orleans, William Faulkner to northern Mississippi, Ellen Glasgow to Richmond, Virginia, or Flannery O'Connor (and Jimmy Carter) to rural Georgia. Outsiders too, of course, like Kate Chopin or Lafcadio Hearn, could become fascinated with Creole and Cajun lore. But one key point to note is that twentieth-century imagery (in Wolfe, Carson McCullers, O'Connor, even Faulkner) derives almost wholly from the Piedmont, not Tidewater, aspect of the South.

This may well smack of regionalism in the narrowest sense, like that of some literary coteries in Wales or Yorkshire. But the South, if not so scholarly, was never so provincial either. Its publicized aim was the deliberate and self-conscious creation of a new model of slave capitalism. A second answer, then, to particularize Southern literature, is a sense of participation in the social and political experience of the South. It was, and remains, a mainly rural society, pervaded by blacks, whose past is mirrored in three major mutually transforming myths—that of an idyllic Golden Age (of John Pendleton Kennedy's *Swallow Barn* or Thomas Nelson Page's *In Ole Virginia*) with its cavalier romanticism abetted by servile, grinning blacks; that of a Gothic terror, stalked by predatory blacks; and a frontier comedy of tall tales.

All are pastoral myths; and a dominant ghost haunting the conference was Allen Tate. As Tate wrote from Paris in 1929: "We must be the last Europeans—there being no Europeans in Europe at present". By which he meant that the South must be European in some ideal sense aimed at twentieth-century modernism: a traditional agricultural community, imbued with personal, dramatic and sensual values. As he was to write in "Remarks on the Southern Religion": "the Southern mind was simple, not top-heavy with learning it had no need of, unintellectual, and composed; it was personal and dramatic, rather than abstract and metaphysical; and it was sensuous because it lived close to a natural scene of great variety and interest."

Here at last was an answer to New England's smug superiority, now dismissed as "self-conscious and colonial". More was a vision, much like Yeats's vision of Ireland with two important provisos. The South was Protestant, not Catholic. Nor was it a feudal society exactly, but, in Tate's phrase, "a semi-feudal society". In fact, black chattel slavery is not feudal at all. Slave society is unorganic, closer in spirit to the Greek and Roman world—that other historical image to which appeal was invariably made. Lewis P. Simpson sums up the Southern impasse:

> Since they did not have any possibility of living by what Tate calls "the higher myth of religion", they tried to live by what he calls "the lower myth of history". They endeavored to imitate historical forms of feeling and emotion. But in adapting the life of European traditionalism to their situation, the southerners succeeded only in being ornamental and meretricious.

The "Confederate dream", as Henry James remarked, was that the rest of the world would somehow conform to the South. To this end was bent the whole rhetoric of politics and law that dominated the South. A renegade talent like Mark Twain's could draw on the oral tradition of south-western humour and a particular brand of Southern Calvinism to puncture that dream. He could denounce the sham medievalism and chivalric traditions of what he once called "The United States of Lyncherdom". He could even publish the memoirs of General Grant. But the most scathing commentaries, omitted here, are by such black contemporaries as Frederick Douglass and William Wells Brown, Charles W. Chesnutt and W. E. B. DuBois.

Contributors of papers to the conference were Louis D. Rubin, Jr, Richard Beale Davis, Arlin Turner, and Lewis P. Simpson, though many others, including Cleanth Brooks, participated actively in the discussions. Meanwhile Louis D. Rubin, Jr, has published his own collection of essays on the Southern imagination, *William Elliott Shoots a Bear*, ranging from Joel Chandler Harris and Sidney Lanier to the Fugitives, Eudora Welty and William Styron. These open up the same range of preoccupations from yet another, and often most illuminating, perspective.

Take his title piece on William Elliott's *Carolina Sports by Land and Water* (1846). The literary parallels, drawn with Melville and Faulkner, seem perfunctory enough. A vivid description of "devil-fishing" evokes a companion of the dying manta-ray with the whale. Or again, a deer-chase, with blood smeared like Indian warpaint, evokes the symbolic blooding of Isaac McCaslin by Sam Fathers in Faulkner's "The Bear". But the question confronted is why the literature of the old South remained so obstinately dilettante, so mediocre. One answer is precisely that serious writing remained too European, too art-inspired. But what is more, Rubin adds, life in the South was *too* personal, too closely meshed in its personal relations for anything other than such light, autobiographical sketches. Aesthetically William Elliott, on the outmost edge of a self-assured cultural empire, made obeisance to its centre; morally he lived in a police state. It was a police state even though the thought-control was self-imposed. As even Thomas Nelson Page was to recognize years later: "The standard of literary work was not a purely literary standard, but one based on public opinion, which in its turn was founded on the general consensus that the existing institution was not to be impugned, directly or indirectly, on any ground or by any means whatsoever". The literary superego could not let the slaveholder be stripped of his privileges nor release women or slaves to subvert his narrative. It would have required an aristocratic genius of Tolstoyan dimensions to dynamite such a beleaguered consensus.

Mark Twain, of course, began his career after the Civil War; and that career, disengaged not only from the Tidewater South or his own border South, moved on to the Mississippi, and so west, and then back east, embodying a whole process of dislodgement. "Not simply the values of the society being left behind", Rubin adds astutely, "but the tensions of the breakaway itself, are part of the southern experience." Was not his own family history a western migration from Virginia to Kentucky, to Tennessee, to frontier Missouri? Were not Orion and Sam Clemens put in a printshop just because of the overscrupulous and ineffective aristocratic pose of John Marshall Clemens, their father, a small-scale slave-owner who had complacently sold off his slaves (and family furniture) down river to pay his debts? Think of Twain's glee on receiving his honorary doctorate at Oxford. How he longed to wear that glorious scarlet robe all day! Dressed in white, like his own Colonel Grangerford, he used to stroll up and down Fifth Avenue just to be stared at.

Was he ever really sure of his own status? Status for this ex-Southerner—whether of a Colonel Sellers in Washington, or of a Tom Sawyer with his gang, or of a pilot on the Mississippi, or of the Connecticut Yankee at the court of King Arthur, or for that matter of the vagrant Huck partnered by a Duke and Dauphin—eclipsed supreme. But mixed up with his feeling for impractical, sentimental, credulous gentry were the standards of a natural tough aristocrat who continually sought out the meaning of real honour and an honest conscience. Truly Sam Clemens proved himself to be the frustrated son of the American border with his love-hate both for the Virginia blue-bloods and that newfangled Northern capitalist technology to be blown sky-high in the *Connecticut Yankee*. "In the Old South", wrote Walter Sullivan in an essay quoted by Rubin, "the honor and the pride were there, not as individual virtues in isolated men, but as a part of the public consciousness, the moral basis on which the culture was constructed."

There lay the seeds of tragedy, or at least of heroic moral drama with, "its tangled loyalties", as Robert Penn Warren said of Faulkner, "its pains and tensions of transition, its pieties and violences". For the Southern writer, in Rubin's words, "has habitually seen man as by nature a creature of society and has seen his alienation from society as tragic, and he has also depicted the base of human action as essentially moral". When this vision was linked with the presence of the black man as outsider in a society itself in the process of transition, the results could well be called tragic. The agrarian *I'll Take My Stand* (1930) was itself emblematic of this Janus-faced focus. The Fugitives "were able to recognize that incipient disruption, because they saw it within themselves; because they were already sufficiently distanced from the homogeneity to be made conscious of what that community had been and was not . . .". The great period of Southern literature was inaugurated by the break-up and collapse of the integrated community.

Louis D. Rubin, Jr, too takes his stand, however. He would emphatically deny that the collapsing moral order of the old South is "the only or even the most important theme or attitude that the southern experience has afforded to its writers". His own belief, from what he has seen of the region and from reading the work of not only Styron but numerous other Southern writers of a new generation, is that imaginative qualities are so very deeply engrained within Southern experience that they will continue to assert themselves almost indefinitely. These more recent or contemporary authors include Eudora Welty, Flannery O'Connor, James Agee, Walker Percy and John Barth. In that belief lies the hope for the continued vigour of the literature of the South in the new era inaugurated by President Jimmy Carter.

To the Editor

Shakespeare

Sir,—By some mischance my proof corrections failed to find their way into my article on William Bott and Shakespearean biography (April 22). These involve points of detail here, and there. May I avail myself of your columns to note one or two particulars?

It is more precise to say that the best bed would pass to the legal heir rather than to the principal legatee, it being in the nature of heirlooms to go to the heir. According to the Whisler deposition, Bott's *wife—not Bott—had the* raisbane *after the poisoning ("this deponent did see her lay a thing under a green carpet"). She was not the victim's mother but the second of the two wives* Bott had "alive at one time". Despite the active participation of an accomplice, Bott was (in Whisler's eyes) the murderer responsible for "the said act of poisoning".

9, SCHOENBAUM.

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Sir,—While I agree with S. Schoenbaum's views (April 22) as to the difficulty of assessing the precise effect of a disposition of property in times well beyond living memory, may I suggest that he is unnecessarily pessimistic as to the possibility of arriving at a reasonably accurate conclusion about the general nature of the provision contemplated by Shakespeare for his widow at the time of his will.

As he suggests, the point is a technical one arising out of the Jacobean law of succession. This is not in its main outlines open to dispute, and under it freehold lands passed to the heir or heirs, subject, where the deceased left a widow, to her right of dower; which was a very valuable right to a life interest in one third of the heir's successors' property, enforceable against the money income, but if necessary against the land or building itself, which she could if necessary occupy, fence off, and so adversely to the interests of the heir. New Place was a freehold, and if there were a valid reason why it should not have been subject to dower it does not; so for as my very imperfect knowledge goes, appear to have been suggested. On the assumption, which seems rational, that New Place was the most important single asset of the estate, her common-law right would have given her a status far removed from that of a barely tolerated poor relation. She and the other persons concerned would have known all along the approximate value of her right and made their calculations accordingly.

As far as chattels were concerned, so far as is known, she got only what she was specifically left; but if she received her rights at common law she got, as I have suggested, somewhere to put her bed and lie down on it in reasonable comfort.

I share Dr Schoenbaum's doubts about Shakespeare's intentions, and his observations about the bewildering variety of local customs stem from an acquaintance with the sources not easy to match. But I suggest that it is an overwhelmingly powerful inference that so radical a departure from the common law as an exclusion or substantial reduction of the widow's right of dower, long established, would have secured notice in the text-books and reported cases, or, or before Shakespeare's day in which it there were such an observation. Sir, the restoration to normal would have required either a statute or a resounding loading case. Applying the methods of one major figure to the problems left by another, this seems to be the case of the dog that did not bark, and the conclusion may be safely drawn that there was nothing to bark at.

Try as one may, one cannot avoid that bed, but since all this is a game, may I suggest that on the evidence, Shakespeare may be in much the same position as a modern testator who, having *disposed of the bulk of his estate, turns to his solicitor and says: "And* don't forget to leave Anne the mint." *I find it a comforting* conclusion to be able to arrive at.

ERIC McLELLAN.

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Lutyens

Sir,—Roderick Gradidge's letter (April 22) on Lutyens's early training gives me the chance to set out the facts of the matter as I understand them. I think they support my view rather than his.

As the son of a painter and brother of an illustrator, Lutyens evidently learnt to draw and think about architecture at an early age. He received basic technical training at the South Kensington School for two years (1885-87) but—not uniquely—learnt more from pottering around in the local builder's yard at Thursley. In 1887 he went to Ernest George's office, where he remained for over a year, leaving in 1889. George took a lot of care with his pupils, as some of his extant testimonials for them show, and there is no reason to think Lutyens was an exception. I agree with Mr Gradidge that he will have learnt most from the assistants; Herbert Baker says as much, and beside Baker there were other talented men in the office, like Arthur Mitchell, Guy Dawber and Weir Schultz. Obviously Lutyens was remarkably quick, but that does not mean that he did not need to learn. His first houses at Crooksbury oozes Ernest George all over, as does an early Kensington studio design of 1891.

Precise details of Lutyens's life between 1887 and 1895 are hard to come by, but we know that by 1889 he had met Norman Shaw, and in the 1890s they were in some sort of vague association no less than three times: at Framfield Place (c 1892), at The Hallams (1894-95), and in connection with the abortive Westminster Improvement Scheme (1898). His early letters to Emily Lytton (has Mr Gradidge read them?) show that he had got to know several of Shaw's old friends and clients, and that on one occasion he dreamt about going with Shaw on a "tour of jobs—oh! so mad". Then in the later 1890s comes a period when Lutyens made a serious study of Philip Webb's work, as is several times hinted in letters quoted in Christopher Hussey's biography.

Of course Roderick Gradidge is right to emphasize Lutyens's precocious ability for design, but he also learnt tricks and borrowed features from others. Anyhow, no architect subsists on design alone; there are other qualities he must learn, how to plan, how to supervise, how to handle clients, and so on. Lutyens found out about these things from ordinary working experience, and in this respect he was no "natural" in architecture as is commonly supposed.

ANDREW SAINT.

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Lord Goddard

Sir,—I have only recently returned from a visit abroad to read the review by Lord Goodman headed "And Nothing But The Law" of my biography of Lord Goddard that appeared in your issue of April 8.

I am flattered by the eminence of the reviewer whom you chose and the length and obvious thought of the review, displaying to the full Lord Goodman's celebrated brilliance of mind and loyal dedication to his several time-worn hobby horses. However, I wonder if he actually read the book. The centre-point of his argument is to be found in this passage: "What emerges is a picture of a man who was to all intents and purposes a Madame Tussaud's creation. A man who does not read widely and fully and has no appreciation of the arts, who has not enjoyed or absorbed Dickens, Thackeray, Trollope, Jane Austen, George Eliot, Marcel Proust, André Gide and a multitude of authors whose works bring the greatest delight to the human mind...." I can only but refer my distinguished reviewer, and your readers, to Mrs Pamela Maurice, Lord Goddard's eldest daughter, quoted on page 21 of my book:

> My father started me off in my love of books and reading which has been a lifelong joy to me, by reading aloud to us, very beautifully, and explaining what he read as we went along. I remember starting with Grimm's *Fairy Tales* and progressing through Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare* to *Kidnapped* and *Catriona* (which I fear I never liked). Every year from my third birthday onward he and my mother gave me a book, and I am glad to say I still have every one of them—a collection of well over sixty volumes!

Curiously enough, though in many ways my father and I were very alike, our tastes in reading differed markedly. His preferences were all for the Victorians—Dickens, Trollope, Thomas Hardy (whom he adored this side idolatry). He confessed that he could not read Jane Austen, who is a constant joy for me, whereas I find the Victorian novelists sentimental and boring. Be that as it may, he gave us the opportunity and the chance to become acquainted with the best in English literature, and there were always many books in our house on which constantly to browse.

FENTON BRESLER.

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Charlotte Brontë

Sir,—The suggestion in my article of March 28 that the addresses of the recently discoved Charlotte Brontë letter might be Miss Lucy Holland, the prototype of Miss Matty in *Cranford*, was, as Winifred Gérin (April 8) says, a tentative one, and it was offered in the hope that evidence might be forthcoming which would positively confirm or deny the attribution. Miss Gérin has raised a number of objections, but they are not in themselves conclusive and I would be grateful if you could allow me further space to reply to her main points.

[illegible] suggests that Charlotte and Gaskell cousin could hardly have corresponded without mutual knowledge of the connection. In fact at the time when Charlotte Brontë's letter was written her acquaintance with Mrs Gaskell amounted to their initial meeting, two visits to the Gaskell home and intermittent correspondence. Certainly the two writers had come to admire each other rapidly, but this is hardly the basis for an instinctive recognition by Charlotte Brontë of the name of a Gaskell cousin at the foot of an unsolicited letter. On the Holland side it is important to remember that Lucy Holland was very much a figure of Mrs Gaskell's early years—one of "two friends of mine in my childhood" she described her in a letter to Ruskin—and by 1853 it is certainly conceivable that she would have been unaware of the comparatively recent friendship between her younger cousin and the author of *Villette*.

Turning to *Cranford* itself, much must depend on the way in which we read it. Miss Gérin refers to "the known character of Lucy Holland"; in fact we know little of Lucy Holland's "character" as distinct from her circumstances and, given the tone of *Cranford*, there are obvious dangers in assuming too much from the fictional presentation of Miss Matty. That Miss Matty would have been unlikely to have poured her heart out to a stranger should not lead us to conclude that Lucy Holland could not have done so. Miss Gérin then refers to "the tender little romance" of *Cranford* and finds it difficult to associate this with the feelings expressed in the correspondence. But to describe Miss Matty's love-affair in such terms is to over-simplify, for it is the more significant that *Cranford* than Miss Gérin allows for. It is referred to meaningfully in five instalments of the novel (not simply in the single instalment in which it is first described as Miss Gérin suggests) and while it is recorded as having taken place "long ago" the whole point is that the memory of it never fails to move Miss Matty to tears. Furthermore the letter refers to a real life situation and not to a fictional one: again allowance has to be made for the effect of the transformation of fact into fiction. As to the unlikelihood of Mrs Gaskell's drawing on the private feelings of a friend for fictional use we know very well that she drew frequently, and not always discreetly, on situations within her personal knowledge for her published work, while again the tone of *Cranford* effectively cushions the impact.

The most obvious objection to my hypothesis remains the fact that the letter refers to "Mrs Holland" while Lucy Holland was a spinster. It must be conceded that there were married candidates available and Miss Gérin's supposition that the "Mrs Holland" of the letter and the "Aunt Lucy Holland" of the supporting material might be different people is arguable. On the evidence as we have it though, I would contend that what we are looking for is a Mrs Holland whose Christian name is Lucy, who had a beneficiary named Roberts. Until we find one the possibility of the *Cranford* connection—and I would not want to put it more strongly than that—remains.

ALAN SHELSTON.

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Dylan Thomas

Sir,—Goronwy Rees speculates why Daniel Jones was not one of my sources for *Dylan Thomas* (*TLS*, April 29). He did not, not as far as the note to page 58: "Daniel Jones, at work on his own reminiscences for some years, has not been anxious to help."

PAUL FERRIS.

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Harold Pinter

Sir,—It was fun to see Martin Esslin (February 25) take his review of my Pinter study as an opportunity to vent his unrestrained prejudice against Germany, the Germans, academic work in general and German scholarly investigations in particular. The consequently a good half of the review was about matters of no direct bearing on my book should not trouble one in any way. Instead Mr Esslin was kind enough to provide plenty of material to keep his mind functioning and to offer Polonius-like loquacity. The arguments in my study he chose to slove out for commentary are, deplorably, of third-rate importance; but then I found the way in which he discussed them quite intriguing.

In his attempt to convince the reader of the insignificance and banality of my findings, he idiotically took some quotations out of their contexts. Little wonder that they appear, when estranged in this manner, trivial and ridiculous. Mr Esslin singled out issues from the first and last chapters only. Presumably he did not take the trouble to read the other chapters which run to some 250 pages and based his assessment on his knowledge of one third of the study. He contemplated that the book "would not be read by the general public". But then, it was not written for the general public. Further, he found it appropriate to observe that it cannot be "a contribution to general insight into dramatic technique or method". The point is: it does not, in the least, claim to be of that nature. It is a book on Pinter and not on drama in general. Does Mr Esslin, perhaps, pride himself on having written such a contribution with his Pinter study? The review would have been even greater fun if Mr Esslin had heeded Hamlet's words: "More matter, with less art."

RÜDIGER IMHOF.

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'The File on the Tsar'

Sir,—My book *The File On The Tsar*, an investigation into the fate of the Russian Imperial family in 1918, has stirred up a good deal of controversy, not least as expressed in a stream of letters in the *TLS*. The battle of words now veering on attrepicking, but I would ask for a few lines in response to the letter from the Librarian of the Houghton Library, Harvard, and the latest broadside from Igor Vinogradoff (Letters, March 25).

It was at the Houghton Library that my co-author and I located the original dossier of the official investigation into the disappearance of the Romanovs—a sort of 1918 version of the Warren files on Kennedy. The librarian now responsibly to my suggestion that nobody had realized the virtue of the documents, and perhaps indeed chose the wrong word. The library certainly knew what they had, and I have never suggested they made a secret of it. What is equally certain is that our present scholars, after many years of study of the Romanov affair were unaware the dossier existed until 1971—when we traced it. We found it, by the way, after just a sort of Holmesian trail that a librarian could very easily follow with the knowledge that the dossier had at one stage been entrusted to a *Times* war correspondent, we followed it laboriously from the widow to Sotheby's, from an manuscript collector to another, and thus (after a year's digging) to its final resting place at Harvard. In no other way could we have come upon it, short of making a big probe of every library catalogue in every centre of study around the globe.

I think the Houghton Library would readily admit that most genuine "finds" of documents have been, and will be, made in the vaults of libraries where they have been sitting listed but unread for many years. It is for the librarian to garner and guard, and for the student to harvest. What we found at Harvard was, in our opinion and in that of many distinguished critics, important evidence that part of the Romanov family left Ekaterinburg alive.

I now cite two further examples not to belabour my point but because a mention in your columns may be authentic news for students of the Romanov affair. Another set of Sokolov documents is held at the Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn, Michigan. They are there because Ford obtained them with a view to using them as part of his anti-semitic polemic, and they have yet to be fully researched. Incidentally, I learned the day I left the Museum that the Houghton Library also happened to have the earliest legal documentation of the Anastasia case. There they lay, a large number of big cartons covered in dust, and there no time to embark on them. But who have been worrying the Anastasia riddle for many decades have greeted mention of this hoard with astonishment and delight. Some day one of them will arrive at Houghton to work on the papers and may—who knows?—make a great discovery. I am sure he will receive the unstinting help and kindness which I had from the Library staff.

I assure Mr Vinogradoff that we did read all the Russian-language material he has mentioned—very expensively, through a translator. And here I think we should draw the truce line. I do not think Mr Vinogradoff would shift his position unless live Romanovs walked into his front parlour. Meanwhile I hope others will treat the case open, and consider it with an open mind.

ANTHONY SUMMERS.

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'The Art of Byzantium'

Sir,—Cyril Mango's relentlessly negative review of the reprint volume of selected articles of mine, *The Art of Byzantium* (March 25), calls for a rebuttal. I shall confine myself to a few examples to illustrate the reviewer's method and approach while foregoing comment on the general tone of his lengthy indictment.

The Theodosian marble relief at Dumbarton Oaks: Professor Mango has always been distrustful of one of the normal pursuits of the art-historian, namely, the attribution of objects to particular dates and places on stylistic grounds. In the present instance the stylistic evidence in favour of late fourth-century Constantinople is compelling. Indeed, the attribution has not been—and cannot be—doubted by any serious student of Theodosian art. It is true that the original context of the fragment has not been established with complete certainty. But this is a different question altogether. As for the inferences I have drawn from what was certainly not a "minor object", they are indeed far-reaching and have to do with the role of Theodosian Constantinople in the development of Christian *narrative* art in the Greek East. Contrary to what the reader of the review is led to believe, corroborative evidence from Constantinople and Asia Minor is cited in the last pages of my article.

The floor mosaics of St Demetrius in Nikopolis: here again, as in the previous example, I am accused of drawing sweeping conclusions from inadequate evidence, one of the objections being that the mosaics are "undated". If Professor Mango means that there is no inscription or document spelling out their date he is correct. But in an article of some forty pages on the Nikopolis mosaics published many years ago I showed that a combination of archaeological, epigraphical and historical evidence makes it as certain as anything in this field can be that these mosaics were done in the Justinianic period. The dating has been accepted by every scholar who has concerned himself with this material since. Professor Mango makes it appear as though from the emblem-like composition of the Nikopolis floors I had single-handedly constructed the concept of a "Justinianic Renaissance". But to recognize retrospective tendencies in Justinianic art and culture is hardly a novel pursuit. In writing on this subject I have always been careful, however, to emphasize that the retrospective element is only one aspect of Justinianic art (see pages 59ff, a passage which Professor Mango disregards).

The reviewer reserves his heaviest fire for my papers dealing with the art of the period between Justinian and Iconoclasm (he pays no attention whatever to the last five of the thirteen papers in the book). He objects to the concept of a stylistic dichotomy in Constantinopolitan art of this period. Here he makes use of a curious argument based on physical size which will be of interest to students of glyptics, coins and other diminutive objects. The busts on the Cross of Justin II in the Vatican, so he seems to say, are too small to provide evidence of an abstract trend in Constantinopolitan court art. Presumably, for the same reason Professor Mango ignores altogether what I had to say on the progressively increasing abstraction in the rendering of imperial portraits on Constantinopolitan gold coins between the reign of Justinian and the reign of Heraclius. That abstract and classicizing trends coexisted in Byzantine art of the seventh century is an undeniable fact; and certainly the concept of "modes"—one of the more fruitful concepts in modern art historical scholarship and one which has been applied with considerable success in a variety of periods—is relevant here. Incidentally, the muscle image of Pope John VII from Old St Peter's, dismissed by Professor Mango as a "ghastly fake", is a perfectly legitimate representative of the portrait "mode". Though the bust was totally remade, probably in the eighteenth century, the head, which alone matters in this connection, is (or was until an unfortunate restoration of quite recent date) substantially intact.

Historical processes *are* complex. The history of Byzantine art in the period between Justinian and Iconoclasm—a span of 160 years which, be it noted, was not recognized as a distinct and important phase until my papers on the subject appeared—has more than its normal share of complexities. The kind of naive positivism which Professor Mango seems to advocate cannot do justice to them.

ERNST KITZINGER.

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Alexander Pope

Sir,—G. S. Rousseau (Letters, February 18) is quite right to stress Pope's close contact with Jacobites. I was at pains to bring this out in my *Social Milieu of Alexander Pope*, but we learn more about the Jacobite movement from Continental sources. It becomes even more striking how many of those publicly praised by Pope were seriously Jacobite at some time or another.

Dr Rousseau mentions Philip Caryll, first cousin of Pope's friend John Caryll. It emerges from evidence recently discovered by Dr Eveline Cruickshanks in the Stuart Papers at Windsor that Philip Caryll was indeed more deeply involved in the Atterbury Plot than I showed in my book. This evidence, which also bears on the origin of Walpole's Black Act, Dr Cruickshanks and I hope soon to publish in a short article.

That there are "degrees of sympathy and complicity without direct assistance to a cause" is another point on which I gladly welcome Dr Rousseau's agreement. My inquiry as to new evidence (Letters, January 14) was not a rhetorical question implying criticism but a serious request. Knowing of none myself, I should nevertheless not be surprised to find that it existed.

To Dr Rousseau's summary of some of the circumstantial evidence in print may I add a couple of further points, short of hard evidence, which bear on whether Pope ever "seriously wished the Stuart family would return to the throne?". J. R. Moore (*MLN* 66, pages 451-4) has drawn our attention to the Jacobite tendency of *Windsor Forest*. To write in a poem of 1713 which purposes a cryptic parallel between William I and William III as hunter and conqueror kings (ruling by force not right) that: "Peace and Plenty tell, a STUART reigns" (l. 42) was surely a Jacobite gesture, for the Act of Succession had in 1701 settled that after Anne's death the available Stuart line should not reign. Does not Pope's poem, dedicated to Lord Lansdowne whose suspected Jacobitism was apparent in 1715 and confirmed in 1722, seem to express the hope of many Tories that James III should succeed Anne after all?

My second point is more dubious since it concerns a conjecturally filled-out copy of a poem never printed by Pope. This is the mysterious "1740. A Poem", which alone of Pope's poetic MSS seems to have resorted to occasional hieroglyphics, and in which Pope left many blanks for fear of the Argus Eye of those who, if they cannot find, can fabricate Treason", as Dr Wilson of Trinity College, Dublin, put it to Joseph Warton (*TLS* 4, page 73). This poem has a passage, conjecturally completed by Bowles, which speaks of the hoped-for saviour of Britain in the following terms (I give Bowles's quite convincing additions in square brackets):

> Alas! on one alone our all relies,
> Let him be honest, and he must be wise,
> Let him no trifler from his [father's school,
> Nor like his [father's father] still a [fool]
> Be but a man! unministered, alone,
> And free at once the Senate and the Throne—
> Whatever his religion or his blood,
> His public virtue makes his title good.
>
> (ll. 85-90, 95-6)

Pope had written in a very broadly similar way to Frederick, Prince of Wales, in 1735, and the lines clearly do describe the Pretender. But "1740. A Poem" bitterly rejects the Patriot Opposition to Walpole which Pope had recently espoused, and this passage is in any case more particular. John Butt objected that the completed lines fitted neither Frederick nor the Pretender. They would, however, perfectly fit Prince Charles Edward Stuart, who by 1740 was emerging as a significant political figure. And one might think that "Whatever his religion ..." has more point if applied to a papist prince for a protestant land than as a line by a Papist poet on a Protestant prince.

HOWARD ERSKINE-HILL.

Jesus College, Cambridge.

Among this week's contributors

MAURICE AGULHON's books include *La République au village*, 1970.

HAROLD BRAVER's edition of *The Science Fiction of Edgar Allan Poe* was published last year.

VERNON BOGDANOR is a Fellow of Brasenose College, Oxford.

PIERRE BOULEZ is Director of the Institut de Recherche et de Coordination Acoustique/Musique in Paris.

MALCOLM BOWIE is the author of *Henri Michaux*, 1973.

ANITA BROOKNER's books include *The Genius of the Future*, 1971, and *Greuze: the Rise and Fall of an Eighteenth Century Phenomenon*, 1972.

ANTHONY BURGESS's *Beard's Roman Women* was published earlier this year.

CHRISTOPHE CAMPOS is the author of *The View of France*, 1965.

R. A. G. CARSON's *Coins: Ancient, Medieval and Modern* was published in 1962.

RICHARD COBB's most recent book, *Tour de France*, was published last year.

MICHAEL CRAWFORD is the author of *The Roman Republican Coinage*, 1973.

JOHN CRUICKSHANK's *Montherlant* was published in 1964.

GEORGE P. ELLIOTT's novels include *In the World* and *Parktilden Village*.

ALISON FAIRLIE is Professor of French at the University of Cambridge.

PETER FRANCE is the author of *Rhetoric and Truth in France*, 1972.

PAUL HALMOS's books include *The Faith of the Counsellors*, 1965, and *The Personal Secretary Society*, 1970.

NORMAN HAMPSON is the author of *The Life and Opinions of Maximilien Robespierre*, 1974.

PETER HEBBLETHWAITE's *The Runaway Church* was published in 1975.

SIR DAVID HUNT's autobiography *On the Spot* was published in 1975.

DOUGLAS JOHNSON is Professor of French History at University College London.

GWYNNE LEWIS is the author of *Life in Revolutionary France*, 1972.

PATRICK MCCARTHY's *Céline* was published in 1975.

GRAHAM MARTIN's *Language, Truth and Poetry* was published last year.

RICHARD MAYNE is the author of *The Europeans*, 1972.

ELIZABETH NORTH's novel *Pelican Rising*, was published in 1975.

DAVID POCOCK's books include *Kanbi and Patidar*, 1972, and *Mind, Body and Wealth*, 1974.

BRYAN RANFT is Professor of Naval History at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich.

ALAN RYAN is the author of *The Philosophy of John Stuart Mill*, 1970.

VERNON SCANNELL's *Not Without Glory: Poets of the Second World War* was published last year.

ARTHUR SHEPS is Associate Professor of History at Scarborough College, University of Toronto.

HARRY SHUKMAN is the author (with G. Katkov) of *Lenin's Path to Power*, 1971.

GEORGE STEINER's *After Babel* was published in 1975.

D. M. THOMAS's collection of poems, *Love and Other Deaths*, was published in 1975.

IGOR VINOGRADOFF edited the correspondence of the Emperors Alexander III and Nicholas II with Prince V. P. Meshchersky for the *Oxford Slavonic Papers*, 1962 and 1964.

J. B. WARD-PERKINS is the author of *The Cities of Ancient Greece and Italy: planning in classical antiquity*, 1974.

I. F. WATKINS is Professor of Medical Microbiology at the Welsh National School of Medicine.

JOHN WEIGHTMAN's *The Concept of the Avant-Garde* was published in 1973.

HAYDEN V. WHITE is Rowlands Professor of History and Letters at Wesleyan University.

GORDON WRIGHT's books include *Rural Revolution in France*, 1964.

THEODORE ZELDIN is the author of *France 1848-1945*, 1973.

Hardbacks and Paperbacks

Sir,—For some years the libraries of this country have been increasingly required, through the artificially inflated prices of cased books, to subsidize the traffic in cheap paperbacks. Market manipulation, or the prompting of the cost-benefit analysis, has done severe, but perhaps not yet irreparable, damage to library holdings, to scholarship and intellectual enterprise, and to the resources of those of the informed reading public who do not wish to treat books as casually as they treat newspapers.

I have been many times assured that the difference in manufacturing cost between the properly stitched and bound book and its limp, frail, "perfect" twin, is very slight. The practice, once prevailing in the book trade, of charging production cost plus a profit margin, has apparently been abandoned in favour of a policy designed to extract maximum profits from the captive library market. Libraries, particularly university libraries, need to acquire less expendable books. In some subject areas, therefore, libraries, with their restricted budgets, are able to buy, under the system, perhaps a half or a third of the number of books they might have afforded under equitable terms of trade.

Presented with this grievance, publishers are apt to explain that the maximization of paperback sales entails margins narrowed to the point where profit has to be recovered on the hardbacks. Without expensive hardbacks, it is said, the universities would be complaining about the limited range and high cost of the paperbacks meant for the student "consumer". It is true that, where a paperback is marketed at £1.50 and the hardback at £7, the publisher might find the same return from the sale of one hundred hard as from that of 1,000 paperbacks; and to make a comparable return on the sale of hardbacks alone it might be necessary to charge between £2.50 and £3 a copy, depending upon the size of the imprint. But at such a price and in such a form libraries could buy more books, private buyers would not need to replace a book after one reading (or opening), and the decline in the quality of production would be arrested.

The anomalous relationship between hard and paperback prices has also made it difficult for publishers to bring out in small quantities at reasonable prices hardbacks which are never to have wide circulation. In this sense the paperbacks may be regarded as subsidizing hardbacks. In literary fields, however, the anomaly has done most harm to editions of standard authors. Many large volumes are issued in an entirely inappropriate paperback of unstitched form at what is ultimately a high cost to the unfortunate consumer.

It may be that, if there is no commercial remedy for these afflictions, the universities will have to find their own, for example, by making typescript, photo-lithographed and coil-bound books for academic use. But it would be far better if production standards were properly recovered. Existing university presses could make a start if, in their charity, they would revert to the manufacture of readable books that are likely to stay the course.

PHILIP BROCKBANK.

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Lord Monboddo

Sir,—I am grateful to Marilyn Butler (Letters, April 1) for her kind words about my review of Antonio Gavin's *Lord Monboddo*, and I agree with her that Peacock generally admired Monboddo and adopted a number of his ideas. Why she supposes that I hold a contrary opinion, and *why* she states that I suggested Peacock ridicules Monboddo in *Melincourt*, are hard to understand. In my very brief passing reference to the subject all I said was that Monboddo's *contention* that orang-utans are really members of the human race was ridiculed by several writers, including Peacock, and I still think this to be the case.

Dr Butler remarks that in *Melincourt* Sir Oran Haut-ton is portrayed as a charming gentlemanly figure; but there is quite beside the point, since much of his appeal stems from the facts that he administers natural justice by throwing offenders down stairs or out of windows, that he himself leaps out of windows when drunk, and that in lieu of a victory speech after his election to Parliament he helps to foment a public affray.

Surely at least part of Peacock's aim was to poke fun at a political system which could permit the return of a mute orang-utan to Parliament, and Sir Oran Haut-ton's charm is due less to the creature's common humanity with the rest of us, on which Monboddo was so insistent, than to his difference—to his simian demeanour and impulsiveness, on the one hand, and his sublime moral rectitude, on the other.

As his motto for *Melincourt* Peacock employed Horace's dictum *vocem comoedia tollit*, and yet this central figure in a novel remarkable for its dialogue remains altogether speechless. Perhaps Dr Butler should not be misled by the many citations from Monboddo—or by the fact that he serves as a model for the book's admirable if irresolute Mr Forester—into supposing that a satirical work which extols the reticence of orang-utans as a political virtue must actually have been meant to endorse Monboddo's earnest speculations about the humanity of the great apes.

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Thomas Hardy and 'Marmion'

Sir,—C. J. S. Lock does Hardy, and thereby Homer, a little less than justice (Letters, February 25). What Graves actually revealed in *Goodbye To All That* (page 250) was that Hardy had defended the final quatrain of a disputed remark of T. E. Lawrence's, saying "I admire it greatly . . . it's in the *Marmion* class!" Lawrence gives his own version of the exchange in a letter to Graves on September 6, 1923: "I said something a little reflecting on Homer: and he took me up at once, saying that it was not to be despised: that it was very kin to *Marmion* . . . saying this not with a grimace, as I would say it, a feeling small and original and modern, but with the most tolerant kindness in the world. Conceive a man to whom Homer and Scott are companions: why feels easy in such presences."

Hardy's more direct thoughts on *Marmion* are given in *The Early Life of Thomas Hardy*, his masked autobiography: "he preferred Scott the poet to Scott the novelist, and never ceased to regret that the author of the most Homeric poem in the English language—*Marmion*—should later have declined on prose fiction" (page 64). He remembers *Marmion* again in 1891, when he writes of "the coastline near Holy Isle or Lindisfarne, at that moment glowing reddish on a deep blue sea under the evening sun, with all the romance of *Marmion* about its aspect" (page 313).

Incidentally, Hardy did indeed know "Prufrock" and copied twenty-three lines of it into the second of his literary notebooks now in the Dorset County Museum. The man for whom "Homer and Scott are companions" is also the man for whom, when nearing eighty, an extended passage of Eliot is worth copying out laboriously. That perspective is worth remembering when one is tempted to simplify Hardy as the last of the great Victorians.

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On ideological grounds

By Alan Ryan

ANTHONY DE CRESPIGNY and KENNETH MINOGUE (Editors): Contemporary Political Philosophers
296pp. Methuen. £5.50 (paperback, £2.95).

Sadly, two of the political philosophers reviewed in this volume are no longer our contemporaries; Leo Strauss died in 1973 and Hannah Arendt in 1975. It is perhaps some consolation that Friedrich Hayek, who was born before both, is increasingly our contemporary. Not only the intellectual community listens to his defence of the "spontaneous" or, in Robert Nozick's idiom, the "unpatterned" distribution of goods and services produced by free exchange; Conservative Party speakers of any intellectual pretensions at all are pretty well obliged to mention Hayek's views on freedom alongside Milton Friedman's on money. Enthusiasts for balanced debate will be glad that *Contemporary Political Philosophers* also includes a discussion of John Rawls, whose theory of justice is, of course, one of the more important rivals to the view that the spontaneous result of transactions between the lawful owners of what they exchange is, necessarily, just. Of the remaining thinkers discussed here, Marcuse, Sartre and C. B. Macpherson represent varieties of unorthodox Marxism, Sir Karl Popper, Raymond Aron and Bertrand de Jouvenel stand for a variety of liberalisms, and Voegelin and Oakeshott defy classification altogether.

The editors contribute an essay each, and a rather odd introduction in which they claim inter alia that the task of characterizing political philosophy has been much complicated by the rise of "an intellectual construction which purports *both* to explain the world, *and* also to elucidate for us the nature of our political duties. This type of construction is called an 'ideology', and its main concern is to destroy in this volume. Having said as much, they explain the admission of Marcuse on the grounds that he is "certainly a distinguished Hegel scholar"; since David Kettler's essay on Marcuse is in many ways the most interesting thing in the book, we ought to be grateful that they have not felt obliged to draw illiberal conclusions from their curious stipulations about what can and cannot count as philosophy. Only the most carping will wonder whether Sartre's self-proclaimed allegiance to Marxism is discounted on the strength of Maurice Cranston's claim that Sartre is really the same old existentialist as in 1943, let alone why Professor Macpherson, who is at least *marxisant*, is not apologized for at all.

The distinctiveness of David Kettler's treatment of Marcuse lies in the way he ties in Marcuse's views on revolution to the classical republican tradition in which revolution was seen as the remedy for political corruption. In effect, what Kettler argues is that the liberal, Lockean defence of revolution is defensive; rebellion is the last resort of the subject who has been abused by government, and who has found no redress in the usual places. The classical republican tradition "stresses the corruption which attends tyranny and sanctions a resistance which will purify the polity and displace the tyrannical regime with one having contrasting qualities of reason and morability". It is not defensive, for, aside from any other considerations, a man has a duty as well as a right to revolt against tyranny. David Kettler's perspective allows him to tackle a good many of Marcuse's obvious doubts and weaknesses without forever getting entangled in the question of Marcuse's fidelity to Hegel, Marx and Freud.

The obviousness of the difficulties which beset Marcuse stem from the fact that this doctrine of revolution raises such questions as whether there is a virtuous polity available for the revolutionary movement to bring into being, and whether there are virtuous actors who can play their revolutionary part without being corrupted.

Marcuse's anxieties about the student revolutionaries of the later 1960s have their place in such an argument: it is not that drop-outs, freaks, sexual experimenters and the rest are somehow too unlike the proletariat to be entitled to stand in for the proletariat in this dobbed version of the Marxist scenario. It is more that he is, rightly, uncertain whether there is any cumulative pressure in the various discontents which afflict all sorts of unrelated groups in the affluent industrial societies; and he is equally uncertain whether the educative tasks which he ascribes to the revolutionary struggle will actually be met in such societies. Some, if not most, of Marcuse's critics have seen in all this a despicable moral evasiveness about the use of violence in promoting social change in America—for it is easy to see him praising the Vietcong or Castro's guerrillas, and then hastily telling American students to lay off their own universities when they began to take him too seriously. But Professor Kettler's account draws the more interesting conclusion that what Marcuse would regard as the right to employ violence against one's government depends entirely upon the consequences of that violence—in which, of course, Marcuse would have Marx's backing all the way. Violence is to be discussed in terms of its efficacy; but ineffective violence is itself a crime against the cause of revolution.

If there is anything to be said against Professor Kettler's essay, it is that it underplays the curiously metaphysical horror which permeates, say, *One Dimensional Man* and its fear that history—or History—has somehow been stopped in its tracks, and the birth of the new world of reason aborted once and for all. Of the other essays which make up *Contemporary Political Philosophers*, the two most successful are notably brisker and more introductory than Kettler's. Anthony Quinton conducts us at a great pace through Karl Popper's attacks on Plato, Hegel and Marx, and Maurice Cranston does an equally swift, though rather less admiring, tour of Sartre's *Critique de la raison dialectique*. Mr Quinton's concern is with the plausibility of Popper's claim that Plato, Hegel and Marx all stand indicted as historicists, holists, and totalitarians. Not entirely to our surprise, he suggests that the concern Plato shows for the lower orders in the *Republic* is just too limited to sustain the charge of totalitarianism; there is no suggestion that they "should be wholly made over into cogs in the machinery of state".

Moreover, the connection between the Platonic theory of history and Plato's politics is tenuous; the crucial connection is that between the elitist theory of knowledge and the elitist account of authority. Again, Hegel is not by any means a totalitarian, even if he is unpleasantly enthusiastic about aggressive nationalism, and Marx's anticipation of the withering away of the state hardly supports any such charge either. In fact, Mr Quinton might have gone a good deal farther in defence of Hegel in particular, whose account of the role of family loyalties, economic associations, and other sorts of group attachment is explicitly intended to show up the totalitarian dangers of a Rousseauist hostility to all non-political loyalties. But nobody could quarrel with his insistence that the tradition of *Liberty* and *A System of Logic* be for all the eccentricities of Popper's understanding of particular thinkers, been enormously enriched by *The Open Society* and the *Logik der Forschung*.

Professor Cranston's aims are mostly expository. In effect, he conducts us through the transformation undergone by Sartre's existentialism between *Being and Nothingness* and the *Critique*. He is extremely deft in showing how Sartre's modest claim that existentialism is peripheral and Marxism central is continuously subverted by Sartre's reinterpretation of Marxism in terms of our horror of the Practico-Inert, and our constant proneness to lapse from membership of a group into the condition of seriality. If anyone other than Sartre is to be held responsible for Sartre's political theory, it is not Marx but Hobbes—and the language of the Pledge and the emphasis on Terror as the bond of the group is very Hobbesian. Some of this will be familiar enough to readers of Alan Warnock's account of Sartre; to the undergraduate audience to whom one supposes this volume is be mainly intended will be glad to have it done so briefly and so crisply and so well.

Person to person

By Paul Halmos

NICHOLAS M. RAGG: People Not Cases
A Philosophical Approach to Social Work
159pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £4.25.

It is giving hostages to fortune to promise too much in the preface of a book. "What I have attempted to do in this book", Nicholas Ragg tells us, "is to solve a long-standing dilemma in social work—the social worker's dual allegiance to the individual client and to society." Both before and since "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's", we have never resolved the dilemma of dual loyalties. The trouble is that Mr Ragg does not make it clear in *People Not Cases* what these dual loyalties in social work really are. At first, he seems to suggest that the duality is represented by the personal versus the professional, but later in the book it seems that there is a duality also between the personal and the political. But the latter he cavalierly disposes of by making his "personal" absorb what we normally regard as "political". The person is a totality of the roles he is capable of playing (including that of choosing which role to play); in his view the professional and the political are roles which are subordinate to this comprehensive personal role.

Ragg argues that the professional role of social worker, with its "detached therapeutic" self-limitation, will not do: it has to be revitalized by letting personal perspective and feeling take over from it. I am not sure whether he allots a similar fate to the political. At times it seems that he does, at others that he permits the sway of the political over the personal, perhaps murmuring that "critical humanism will take care of things".

The enjoinder to "treat people as people", that is to say not as cases, is embodied in the title, and Ragg begins by stressing the supremacy of the personal over technical or theoretical expertise. In spite of repeated references to "humanism", this personal quality carries the same mystical undertones that one can find throughout the literature of counselling, psychotherapy and social casework.

There is nothing wrong with this so long as it is recognized and admitted. It is hard for a "critical" humanist to have to confess to this: although Ragg does do so, his description of the personal involves irreducible moral categories—respect for the client's integrity and identity, honesty about the facts and feelings of past and present, "genuine human sympathy and understanding". Had he been familiar with the works of Truax, Bergin, Carkhuff, and other technicians in counselling, who have already trodden a good stretch of the path followed here, he could have advanced the cause of the personal more expeditiously.

Just the same, his attention to the concept and his recognition of its importance are salutary. It is worth repeating—swamped as we are by the current politicized and anti-individualistic tide in social-work literature—that the client is not a "system" with which to tinker but a person with whom the social worker communicates. The so-called "system theories" of social work are ripe for some criticism; perhaps Ragg could undertake this for Pincus and Minahan, as well as for Goldstein, to mention some who have been overlooked by him. He is much closer to the earlier thinking in social work than he may realize. After all, it matters little whether we rename "insight-giving" by calling it "description", the important thing is that his account of description does amount to insight-giving.

His emphasis on personal intimacy, his appreciation of the one-to-one relationship, and his recommendation to look at the present in terms of the past, are timely reminders to social workers today that these notions are not as obscurantist, reactionary and out-of-date as their radical colleagues would suggest. These are welcome preoccupations at a time when students of social work are taught more about control than about care; and when many of them assume that personal interest in a client is a betrayal of political responsibilities; caring for people makes the social worker unwarily about the unjust society in which they live. At various passages one cannot help feeling an appreciative surprise at the author's courage or, at least enterprise, in reopening the issues of the "totally personal" in professional social work. The moral climate of the times is such that one radical social workers look upon personalized social work with scarcely concealed contempt (reflecting, for example, on a current issue of a social work journal: even life in a ghetto street, one of them says ing, "we've got rats!", the other "that's nothing, we've got social workers!").

Also, by the time one has read the third and fifth chapters of the book one discovers that Ragg's "personal" is just too comprehensive a concept to do much good. We learn that it is part of the personal to be politically involved in the client. In fact it is incumbent upon the personally operating social worker to "achieve a society fit for persons", we are told. "In a society", Mr Ragg writes,

> attempting to realise the standards of critical humanism, it should be possible for a social caseworker to work in solidarity with the client, for by so doing he will be contributing to the creation of a more socially just society and one in which opportunities for self-realisation are more widely and equally available.

We take it that if the client is a member of the National Front or principle laid down here would apply. But how about the Tories or the Liberals? Would "critical humanism", Ragg's arbiter, embrace both, or only one, or neither? Or perhaps we are meant to be confined to a party or group with explicitly sympathetic attitudes to equality? But which one, Mr Prentice's or Andy Bevan's Labour Party? Or perhaps we ought to look farther to the left?

There are many weighty reasons why a merger between the personal and the political should not be contemplated in just such breezy terms as Ragg suggests. To couch such objections in the most modest terms it is really too much to expect from a social worker that he or she should be committed to everything the client is committed to. The notion of critical humanism—admirable as it is—is no substitute.

Then, on further thought, Ragg departs from the principle of "non-directiveness" and asks the social worker *not* to go along with whatever ideological views the client has but, "committed to the ideals of critical humanism" as he is supposed to be, he "should, logically, lead him [the client] to engage in activities to change his (and the client's) society."

Elsewhere he says that the social worker should "counter the norms and values prevailing either in [the] wider society or in the client's immediate social circumstances". Of course, it can be said—and is being said—that this kind of intervention only keeps democracy on its toes and is, therefore, commendable. This may be so, but there is also the danger of confusing a qualification in social work with a document issued by a returning officer after an election. The truth is that the social worker has no mandate to pursue the political objectives assigned to him by his radical colleagues. It is a pity that Ragg's messianic coupling of the personal and the political slides over this confusion.

Casualty wards

By Anne Barnes

TOM HART: Safe on a Seesaw
150pp. Quarter Books. £4.25.

This is a collection of characters and situations which would seem familiar to anyone who had worked in children's homes. Some are desperate stories with terrible consequences, some end with a tentative "happily ever after"; others are inconclusive. No attempt has been made to strain them into any sort of pattern in order to make a point about children in care: the book is simply a parade of, arguables and an attempt to meet them with hope.

Tom Hart is now the superintendent of a Regional Reassessment Centre in South London; he has spent many years looking after children and he has an immediate point to make: those who work in children's homes and community schools, who see their children being failed by society and the punished by that society, know that so much more could be done if there were enough people to do it".

He wants everyone to know about the deprivations experienced by children in care and to feel a responsibility for them, so he tries to explain without sentimentality or smugness exactly what these deprivations are like. He describes a town in the north of England in the 1930s when huge numbers of Irish navvies worked in the most primitive conditions building housing estates. Among them, one old man was deeply revered and respected as a father figure. When he was dying, the author, then a small boy, accompanied his father to this man's bedside in the pathetic lodging house where he lived, and it was in the voices and faces of the Irishmen hanging around, waiting, praying for him, that he first perceived the desolation he was later to recognise in the children with whom he worked. This is intended as a passing illustration but it has an Orwellian strength and clarity: it is so free of superfluous detail and selfconsciousness that it is more affecting than any of his other anecdotes.

Otherwise it is a frustrating book. A lot of children appear; each one's problems are briefly outlined and some encounter with him is described, but his story is left dangling as we move on to another setpiece about another child. There is the story of Lennie who is in the habit of swallowing knives and forks for no obvious reason and, just as alarming but less picturesque, an account of Nigel who has been treated as severely subnormal when really he is suffering from a rare form of deafness which has escaped detection. There are pathetic examples of adolescent girls looking for affection and several teenage contortions of defiance and rejection. They all go by very fast, and in spite of Mr Hart's perfectly uncluttered style, their real dilemmas often remain obscure, because we are distracted by the author's own personality: by his masterfully noncommittal questions and his gathering enlightenment. Strangely, he is nearest to achieving his aim when he forgets his own skill and experience and goes back to describe an incident in his own childhood.

One man's Revolution

By Norman Hampson

NICHOLAS RUAULT: Gazette d'un Parisien sous la Révolution
493pp. Paris: Perrin. 62fr.

Nicholas Ruault's translations of Virgil have scarcely won him immortal fame, but he was not a nonentity. Between 1784 and 1789 he collaborated with Beaumarchais and Condorcet to produce the Kehl edition of Voltaire's works. He was a friend of Fabre d'Eglantine and Clootz. During the Revolution he worked on the editorial staff of the *Moniteur* and for a few months in the summer of 1794 he brought out his own newspaper, the *Conservateur décadaire*. He was one of the men who bridged the gap between the Enlightenment and the Revolution, content to remain in the background but well informed, eager to keep in touch with what was going on and—fortunately for posterity—devoured by the literary man's passion for putting it all down on paper, whatever the risk to his own life. *His Gazette* consists of one or two letters written to a friend in 1771-72, brief diaries of the events of June-July, 1789, and August, 1792, but mainly of several hundred letters to his brother, a *curé* at Evreux, covering the period from 1783 to 1796. Unlike his contemporary, Guittard de Floriban, who seems to have kept his voluminous diary for the purpose of concealing his thoughts (see *TLS*, May 2, 1975), Ruault told his brother his views about everything. He tells us a good deal too.

Those who turn to him for sensational revelations or startling new evidence about what happened will be disappointed. Most of what can be learnt from the outside about the course of the Revolution is pretty well established and Ruault never penetrated to the inside. None the less, he contributes the occasional revealing detail and he managed to see a good deal for himself. The fact that Lenoir, the *lieutenant de police* in charge of censorship, allowed the edition of Voltaire to be sent from abroad to Lenoir's own address, says a good deal about the nature of Ancien Régime bureaucracy. Ruault's account of the crisis of July, 1789, introduces some unfamiliar nuances. At the news of Necker's dismissal the bourgeois closed the theatres and the well-dressed Sunday afternoon crowds in the Tuileries gardens dashed off home out of harm's way. Things only warmed up in the evening, with the return to the capital of "le peuple des artisans et manouvriers qui étaient dans les guingettes des faubourgs". It was people of this stamp who, on the following day, threatened to burn down the homes of the bourgeois unless they joined in the insurrection. That brought into being the National Guard, whose creation was being discussed as early as July 8. Ruault grasped the importance of the part played by regular troops in the storming of the Bastille; not merely the Gardes Françaises but deserters from other regiments that had passed through Paris. He knew what he was talking about since he was himself one of those forced to haul the guns to the Bastille.

Whether as conscript or volunteer, he was rather good at being on the spot when things happened. He witnessed the invasion of the Tuileries on June 20, 1792, and served with the battalion of the Théâtre Français Section on the night of August 9-10. Since his unit stood down at four in the morning after guarding the pont Saint-Michel all night—a curiously passive role to be allotted to Danton's own Section—Ruault was free to watch the battle for the Tuileries as a spectator. He got rather closer to the September massacres, making two visits to the Abbaye and confronting Maillard, Marat and Panis, in a very brave—and successful—attempt to save Montmorin's secretary. His description of what he saw that day deserves to become an anthology piece. Although not present himself on October 5, 1789, he heard in scatological detail how the crowd treated Marie Antoinette's bedchamber and his account adds a pathological dimension to the more aseptic studies of crowd psychology by Rudé and Lefebvre.

On one or two occasions he came into contact with the revolutionary leaders. As early as July 17, 1792, he passed on to his brother information he had received from Collot d'Herbois and Chénier that the Jacobin leaders were meeting at Charenton to plan an attack on the Tuileries. He met Collot again, in rather different circumstances, when the *décemvir* was in Ruault's office touching up the *Moniteur's* report of one of his speeches, during the summer of 1794. Ruault mentioned the name of a recent editor of the paper and was appalled by the casual brutality of Collot's reply, "Guillotiné, je crois qu'il n'est pas encore guillotiné". Billaud-Varenne was no more reassuring. To a friend of Ruault's who praised his *Conservateur décadaire*, Billaud replied that it was counter-revolutionary: "ce premier moment nous nous occuperons de ses auteurs". Ruault himself, who called his paper "ridicule à force de démocratie", had some justification for referring to Collot and Billaud as "féroces hyènes".

All this, perhaps, does not add up to very much, whatever its anecdotal interest. Through Ruault, however, we can learn something of what the well-informed man in the street knew or believed at any particular time. As early as 1787 there were rumours that Provence aspired to the throne and also that Louis XVI was to be deposed in favour of his son, with Orléans as regent—a couple of hardy revolutionary perennials. Well before 1789 Ruault showed a total contempt for the "vieux courtisan", the "ours mal léché", which was presumably shared by others of Louis XVI's subjects. His views on the origins of the Revolution were closer to those of the present-day A-level candidate than to the Cobbanites. He thought Versailles devoured a quarter of the national budget. The clergy and nobility décraseut le peuple par leurs immunités, leurs franchises, leurs privilèges". The only hope for the *peuple* was for its bourgeois leaders to force the privileged orders to pay their fair share of taxation. "La querelle alors serait finie, l'ordre rétabli et la paix chez les esprits." If that happened, the *philosophes* would deserve a good deal of the credit: "Grâces soient rendues à Voltaire, à Montesquieu, à Raynal, à Helvétius qui ont répandu sur nous la lumière à grands flots." It was a rather select company, and it excluded Diderot as well as Rousseau.

Despite his own feelings about the king, Ruault admits his popularity in the early days of the Revolution, even after his power had been destroyed by the insurrection of July 17?85. All this had gone by the spring of 1791, when Louis was credited with plans to escape from Paris, months before Varennes. Ruault records as fact the story manufactured by the Cordeliers propaganda machine, of how Danton stopped La Fayette from having martial law proclaimed when the crowd prevented the royal family leaving for Saint-Cloud, which is some sort of tribute to the influence of the media. On the whole, both the and the public were sufficiently well informed to be waiting for events to happen; he was expecting an attack on the Tuileries as early as June 26, 1792, and an insurrection against the Girondins by May 23, 1793. On June 21, 1791 he told his brother that Robespierre was boycotting the meetings of the Committee of Public Safety. Of course, he knew rather more than most people and the editorial offices of the *Moniteur* were not a bad listening-post.

The main interest of the letters, however, lies elsewhere. In their frankness and their frequency they provide an almost unique account of how an intelligent and educated man, of progressive views and moderate temperament, reacted to the extraordinary events of the Revolution. Since the letters were sent off as soon as written they could not be retouched to provide belated proof of their author's prescience. Ruault said what he meant and never wrote with an eye to a possible censor. His confidence in his brother's discretion was obviously well justified and he was lucky with the post. It was not until January 1794 that he stopped using the mail and only wrote when he had secure means of communication. Except when his brother visited him in Paris and when his only son died in the summer of 1793, he was a regular correspondent. The result of his labours is a fascinating description of one man's revolution.

Ruault's initial reaction to the political crisis that he saw approaching is that of an apprehensive conservative. In November 1786 he fears a "révolution effrayante" and eighteen months later, an "anarchie horrible". He approves of double representation for the Third Estate, in January, 1789, but says that he himself would only vote for a landowner. As late as April he is not sure that the *vote par tête* was a good idea. In June he fears a violent outbreak by "la partie du peuple sans propriété . . . sans principes moraux". When it came and he finds himself dragging cannon to the Bastille, his reaction is the opposite to what one might have expected. Both then and subsequently, he quickly came to terms with a *fait accompli* and accommodated himself easily enough to what he had dreaded in prospect. In August he is still uneasy about "une populace turbulente, inquiète et qui voudrait que la moitié de la ville fût en feu pour piller l'autre", but confident that "cette fièvre passera et la liberté restera". He disapproves of the pretensions of the Palais Royal to govern the country and thinks a royal veto necessary to preserve Franco from the "despotisme de 8 à 900 démocrates".

At this point his brother seems to have had the unfortunate idea of making a prolonged stay in Paris and the correspondence breaks off until December. During the long stalemate of 1790 and 1791 Ruault was preoccupied, like a good Voltairean, with the need to reinforce the executive in order to avert anarchy in the provinces. What prevented him from putting his money on the monarchy was his violent anticlericalism—which must have strained the patience of his brother although it never seems to have disturbed their friendship—and his growing revolutionary nationalism. He takes up a belligerent attitude towards the feudal claims of the German princes and explodes in predictable anger at the idea that the Civil Constitution of the Clergy might need papal approval: "Il n'y a point de pape qui tienne contre une Assemblée nationale de *France*; il n'en serait pas de même d'une assemblée nationale d'Italie."

In September 1790, he joined the Jacobins. During the spring of 1791 his anger at counter-revolutionary agitation and the prospect of foreign intervention in support of it becomes almost an obsession. Even before Varennes he could write, "si on était barbarement juste ou courageux, on lui [Marie Antoinette] ferait son procès et sa tête ne tiendrait plus sur ses épaules". The Champ de Mars crisis finds him apprehensive but resolute. He signed the Jacobin petition of July 15, but only to avoid being called an *aristocrate*. Like all good revolutionaries, he greatly overestimates the casualties at the "massacre", which he puts at 1,200-1,500, but he was right when he predicted that Bailly and La Fayette would pay dearly for it and that the *démocrates* would beat the *royalistes* in the end. The former were becoming "vrais" rather than "they", while the latter now included the Feuillants: "je déteste encore plus l'hypocrisie que la guerre civile."

During the winter of 1791-92 he had been transformed by an influx of new members like Chabot.

Once more he comes to terms with the situation and as early as September 25 he is writing quite happily, "j'aime assez le système républicain". This was not due to any particular affection for the deputies from Paris, or to hatred of Louis XVI. He comments very wisely on the decision to try the king: "Le sang attire le sang; on commence par en répandre quelques gouttes et l'on finit par des torrents et les tueurs sortent tués à leur tour". At the same time he never had any use at all for the Girondins, whom he regards as wholly responsible for the division amongst the republicans. Roland is "un pauvre homme" and he says very shrewdly of his supporters: "Ces Messieurs qui ont fait fortune par les Jacobins les décrient aujourd'hui après avoir été leurs plus ardents apologistes". By March, 1793, Roland has become "cet insensé vieillard, insupportable à ses amis mêmes".

Moderation itself had become suspect and Ruault looked like becoming an *enragé*. He contrasts "les jolis messieurs qui applaudissaient si noblement à la pièce de *l'Ami des Lois*" with the *pauvre peuple* that had done all the fighting and was being denied any share in the benefits of the Revolution. Not surprisingly, he takes the coup d'état of May 31 in his stride—though he would have liked to purge as many Montagnards as Girondins and rid the Assembly of half of the Paris deputies. A letter of July 26, 1793, shows him at the peak of his radicalism, welcoming the federalist revolt as a means of boiling off counter-revolutionary scum and saying in a matter-of-fact sort of way, apropos of Custine's arrest, that the *sans-culottes* made no distinction between incompetence and treason.

With the exception of one short fragment, there are no more letters until December, by which time Ruault's attitude has become very different. He regards decentralization as madness and denounces "les horreurs, les sottises, les folies publiques". "Quelle sera la

fin de tout ceci? Elle ne peut être que misérable." The only men for whom he has any sympathy are Danton and Desmoulins, "qui sont revenus au bon sens", and the only *hommes honnêtes* on the Committee of Public Safety are Carnot, Lindet, Prieur (it is not clear which of the two) and Jeanbon Saint-André. On April 2 he predicted that Danton and Desmoulins would be convicted by the Revolutionary tribunal, whatever the "motif apparent" for their arrest, which certainly suggests that the famous court had lost any credibility it might once have possessed, at least in the eyes of the men from the *Moniteur*. He adds another epigram to the collection attributed to Danton: "Tant que l'on dira *Robespierre et Danton* cela ira bien, je n'aurai rien à craindre; mais si jamais on dit: *Danton et Robespierre*, je suis un homme perdu."

When his own life is in danger he retains his detachment: in the letter in which he refers to Billaud, Collot and Amar as hyenas and regrets that Lecointre had not murdered Robespierre at the Fête de l'Etre Suprême, he still calls the festival sublime and concedes that the Committee of Public Safety has performed "des choses merveilleuses pour le salut de l'Etat, pour la défense de la patrie". This letter, which he may have considered a kind of testament, includes a perceptive character-study of Robespierre, "ce dictateur désiré des esprits sages", less cruel than the public believed, but convinced that he alone could save the Revolution and blind to the fact that his power was merely that of persuasion.

Ruault's next letter begins: "Vive Dieu! mon cher ami! la tyrannie décemvirale est à bas depuis trois jours." Understandably enough, in view of Billaud's threat to his own life, he emphasizes from the start that the 9 Thermidor was a defeat for the Committee of Public Safety as a whole and he always insists that Billaud, Collot and Barère were as guilty as the Robespierrist trio. By January 1795, however, even the 9 Thermidor has lost much of its charm.

On détruit à force tout le système du 31 mai. Juger de l'embarras horrible où se trouvent les patriotes. . . . Quel parti peuvent donc prendre les patriotes de bonne foi? . . . Il serait à souhaiter qu'il vient un homme qui terminât tout cela d'un seul coup.

The 9 Thermidor may have ended the Terror, but he blames it for the subsequent inflation. By March, with the White Terror raging in the South and the *jeunesse dorée* dominating the streets of Paris, "je suis devenue athée en matière de révolution". As the food crisis worsens, Ruault finds his sympathies pulled in different directions. The crowds who queued all night for their miserable bread ration fill him with both pity and alarm; he has not much regard for "Pauguste, Sénat français" and even less for

les durs et *avares colons!* Ils profitent de l'absurde liberté illimitée du commerce de grains dans l'intérieur, du régime des économistes adopté depuis le 9 Thermidor, pour mettre à nu le peuple des villes. . . . S'il faut être pauvre pour être démocrate, nous le serons plus d'un siècle et demi!

Even the victorious peace with Prussia is small consolation: "Je me porte mal et ne dors ni jour ni nuit. Je suis anxieux de la tête aux pieds." He had never written anything like that before, even during the worst of the Terror.

His next letter reports growing despair and an epidemic of suicides in Paris, while the Convention listened unmoved to reports of the White Terror in Lyons. "Les royalistes et les dévots insultent publiquement ceux qui ont pris le parti de la liberté." "Le peuple, las de tout ceci, ne prend plus à cœur rien. . . . On crie de tous côtés que cela finisse, n'importe comment."

By July he is repudiating all his gods:

La liberté politique et la liberté ne peuvent marcher ensemble . . . Les Français voulu mettre en politique leurs belles maximes et nous voyons tout ce qu'il nous coûte aujourd'hui et ce qu'il en coûtera encore par la suite. Je crains fort que la philosophie ne ramène dans un long discrédit à cause seulement de la maudite révolution.

Like Guittard de Floriban, he is the *journée* of 13 Vendémiaire a battle between the regular army and the people of Paris, and he sums up the consequences with his usual good judgment:

Le canon qui a foudroyé les royalistes et les mécontents a aussi l'amour de la République dans un grand nombre de cœurs. . . . La Convention vient de mettre dans la dépendance des soldats qui créèrent peut-demain *un imperator*, un Cæsar.

He had already mentioned the rôle in the repression of the revolt of "un jeune officier d'artillerie corse ou italien". After that there are only a couple of letters and a surviving correspondence comes to a sudden end in May 1796. He had a good many more years to live, but there was not much more for him to say.

The Frenchification of France

By Maurice Agulhon

EUGEN WEBER:
Peasants into Frenchmen
The Modernization of Rural France
615pp. Chatto and Windus. £12.

France holds a large place in historical writing in English. The country fascinates English and American scholars, one might say, because it is at once close to them yet remote. It is close because of our long common past and because we belong to the same liberal world of the nineteenth century; and remote because of the chaotic nature of French institutional history, of the archaic, aberrant, at times dissident aspects of "la France profonde", of the "religious" passions still aroused today by political quarrels, and so on. Hence the critical gaze, both distant and acute, of a Stanley Hoffmann, or a Theodore Zeldin (the second volume of whose *France 1848-1915* we await with impatience) or of so many others.

Eugen Weber, Professor of History in the University of California, ranks high among English-language historians of France. Already well known for his exhaustive study of the extreme right-wing movement L'Action Française (1964), he has now moved away from political to social and cultural history, and to some extent from the towns to the countryside. The aim of his book is expressed perfectly by its title: *Peasants into Frenchmen: The modernization of rural France, 1870-1914*. Rural France *was* modernized, the first phase of the Third Republic (1870-1914) *was* decisive in its metamorphosis, and the chief characteristic of this modernization *was* the awakening of a national consciousness. Around the middle of the nineteenth century, says Professor Weber, he discovered:

a France where many did not speak French or know (let alone use) the metric system, where "pistoles" and "écus" were better known than francs, where roads were few and markets important. . . . This book is about how all this changed, and about how mentalities altered in the process; in a word, about how underdeveloped France was integrated into the modern world and the official culture of Paris, of the cities.

The book is so constructed as to demonstrate this. Part 1 describes, in eleven chapters, "the way things were", and stresses the primitive way of life of the countryside; Chapter 1, which is called "A country of savages" reminds us that even in the time of Louis Philippe or Napoleon III the townsfolk and French government officials still looked on their fellow-countrymen in Brittany or the Pyrenees with the half-anxious, half-protective eye of an explorer or a missionary. Part 2 which has nine chapters, enumerates "the agencies of change", and Part 3, also of nine chapters, their results, under the title "change and assimilation": or in other words how the mentality of the peasants absorbed the new sense of nationhood.

It is in Part 2 that the importance of Professor Weber's book lies. His analysis of the factors leading to change has the great merit of allowing not only for those changes which stemmed from deliberate policy—the democratic republican system, the social mix brought about by compulsory military service, and especially the primary schools—but also those spontaneous processes which are the normal consequence of economic development: roads and transport, the increase in exchanges, closer relations with the towns. All the same, the fact that Professor Weber has chosen as the starting and finishing points of his study the eminently political and "événementiel" dates of 1870 and 1914 shows that he tends to accord greater importance to the deliberate than to the spontaneous. He talks happily about the threesome of "roads, barracks and schools" and two at least of these three terms certainly evoke a purposeful attempt at education and national integration.

This attempt did not fail to meet with resistance, nor to do damage. Some elements of popular culture in the provinces disappeared. In his final chapter, on "Cultures and Civilizations", which serves as a general conclusion, Professor Weber is thus led to discuss the problem of "internal colonization". Did the "Frenchification" of the Midi or of the West of the *hexagone* not depend on the same process as the "Frenchification" of Algeria or Senegal, and was it not equally illegitimate? Observers of the French political scene today will know that more and more voices are being raised to this effect. Professor Weber, sensibly, does not go so far but seems to conclude finally that the two phenomena are unalike. There was genuine progress, even if it did involve a certain impoverishment of cultural diversity and folk customs. But he fails to use the fundamental argument that enables us to distinguish these two acts of "colonization": the right to vote which was given to the Bretons but refused to the Arabs is a by no means negligible difference!

If there were one criticism I should want to level at this book it would be at its choice of regions and dates—for these go together. To say that the rural provinces of France experienced national integration and modernity between 1870 and 1914 is to set the concluding date rather too early for certain isolated mountain cantons, which were not opened up before 1930, and the initial date much too late for many rural districts. In the Paris basin, the north-east, the east and even the south-east, which were modernized, politicized and "nationalized" around 1830 or 1848, Professor Weber says, moreover, in his preface, that he has concentrated on the regions of the west (Brittany), the centre (the Limousin) and the south-west (Gascony and the Pyrenees) which were the most backward and therefore the best suited to his chronology. A proper title for his book, therefore, would have been the *completion* of the modernization of rural France.

One might also challenge here and there the arrangement of the subject-matter and of the chapters. Part 3, which is concerned with the results of modernization, in fact includes many descriptions of the earlier period which it would have been more logical to place in Part 1.

But these are minor disagreements. In a work such as this, its construction, orientation and conclusions matter less than the mass of data which it brings together and the subtlety with which they are analysed. In this respect we cannot be grateful to Professor Weber. The attempt to study and describe popular civilization of modern France has led to such already classic surveys as Robert Mandrou's and Georges Duby's *Histoire de la civilisation française* (1958), and the *Histoire du peuple français* of Georges Duveau and others (1964), and has recently been successful revisited by Maurice Crubellier's *Histoire culturelle de la France* (1974); Professor Weber has now contributed a work of the highest quality and importance.

The archaeology of sex

By Hayden White

MICHEL FOUCAULT:
Histoire de la Sexualité
Volume 1: La Volonté de savoir
211pp. Paris: Gallimard. 24fr.

Michel Foucault writes books faster than the responsible reader can consume them. We have hardly absorbed his study of penal and educational institutions in western Europe, *Surveiller et punir* (1976), before we are asked to begin what promises to be a six-volume study of "the history of sexuality". As in his earlier works on psychology, madness, medicine, the human sciences, penology, and "knowledge" itself, Foucault promises to disclose the unacknowledged presuppositions (what he calls the "archaeology") of modern Western society's "discourse" on "sexuality".

The finished work will be, he tells us, not a study of sexual customs or even the more common attitudes toward or beliefs about sex, but rather an analysis of Western man's obsessive need to talk about sex, analyse it, classify it, explain it, and control it. In the process he proposes to show how the notion of "sexuality" became disengaged from the fact of "sex", how the abstraction "sexuality" became reified, hypostatized and constituted as a basis for the social disciplining of the individual, the group, and even the species. The discourse on sexuality will be set within the context of a kind of madness which, in his view, is peculiarly Western, a madness comprised of equal measures of a drive for unlimited power, on the one side, and for knowledge, on the other. Western culture, he suggests, insanely confuses power and knowledge with the imperatives of social control. In the process, pleasure itself becomes a casualty.

The story to be told (or rather the plot to be disclosed) in subsequent volumes has to do with the ways in which Western culture has contrived certain disciplines (demography, medicine, psychiatry, psychoanalysis, penology, pedagogy, the life and human sciences in general) which promote and sustain an obsessive interest in "sexuality" while everywhere claiming to treat, control, and turn to socially useful purposes the deviant form of its manifestations. It will also be a story of how "sex" became disengaged from the body, forms the life of the organism, in order to take on magical powers as a force which is everywhere and nowhere, which supposedly underlies every aspect of human life (as "instinct" or "drive"), and which is cultivated in specific ways in order to increase the power of the group over the individual.

In this introductory volume, Foucault tries among other things to explode the idea that Western society is peculiarly "repressive". Far from being repressive, he contends, Western society has not only extended the notion of "sexuality" to include almost every aspect of human life, but has done so in such a way as to increase our fascination with it. Although everyone talks about "repression," Foucault takes this concept for granted as an explanation for every aspect of social life, such talk, Foucault maintains, is really only another form of "repressive de-sublimation". What is truly original in Western culture, he insists, is its specification and extension of the notion of "perversion". Western culture, he concludes, is "truly and genuinely" perverse, not because it is puritanical or hypocritical, but because the principal forms of social control over the individual would be unthinkable without the cultivation of the category of "the perverse".

In his elaboration of notions such as this, Foucault is at his polemical best. He brilliantly succeeds in turning commonplaces on their heads (or sides), permitting us to see that, like any notion that has become a part of conventional wisdom, they can be viewed in at least two ways—revealing their arbitrary nature in the process. Like Nietzsche, he always seeks to show that every apparent progress in culture must be paid for in some kind of mutilation, either of the body or the soul. Thus, the apparent liberation effected by our supposedly enlightened attitudes towards sexuality, and especially those found in modern medicine, pedagogy, penology, and psychiatry, represent only the superficially brighter side of a darker history of social manipulation.

Like all of his "histories", this one begins in the sixteenth century which, in spite of the brutality of most of its techniques of social control, at least left the body free or dealt with it directly through physical punishment. In the seventeenth century, however, Foucault perceives a crucial turn in Western attitudes toward the body, manifested in the imposition of new kinds of social control and the cultivation of techniques for internalizing social imperatives: introspection, examination of conscience, and systematic confession. Thereafter, Western man is transformed into a "confessing animal", specialist in methods of dredging up sinful thoughts, dark emotions, fleshly fantasies, lingering compulsively over them, classifying them, analysing them, ordering them. With the foundation of the modern state, this imperative to confess was secularized and socialized by the foundation of new human sciences—psychology, demography, and medicine, all centred on the body conceived as a machine susceptible to technical manipulation and control. On the basis of this new conception of the body, Western culture created what is, in Foucault's estimation, its unique contribution to world civilization, a *scientia sexualis*, which, unlike its ancient and Eastern counterpart, the *ars sexualis*, is more concerned with controlling sex than increasing its pleasure.

In the nineteenth century, the era of the bourgeoisie in power, this "science of sexuality" was further elaborated and systematically applied, though less to the oppressed lower classes than to the bourgeoisie itself, the education, penology, medicine, and psychiatry, what might seem at first glance to be an advance towards enlightenment and liberation is revealed on closer scrutiny to be only a further intrusion of society into the life of the individual. Foucault proposes to analyse in subsequent volumes the "four grand strategies" used to increase control: the hysterization of the female, the sexualization of childhood, the socialization of procreative conduct, and the psychiatrization of "perverse" pleasures. Medicine, pedagogy, and psychiatry will combine in the nineteenth century to create new social types which the disciplines involved are intended to "treat": the frigid wife, the impotent husband, the sadistic father, the hysterical daughter, and the homosexual youth. Treatment of these types, he maintains, was intended both to affirm the reality of the illnesses from which they were suffering and to moderate symptoms without eliminating the causes of their suffering.

The resultant control of sexuality, Foucault concludes, was less an instrument for oppressing the lower classes than a kind of class self-affirmation. The bourgeoisie, he suggests, virtually capitalizes its own "health" and does so by transforming the lived condition of its incestuous family structure into a social ideal. By defining the heterosexual monogamous couple as the very foundation of social life, bourgeois society is able to regard every other form of erotic relationship as "contre-nature", a threat to nature, as well as to society. It is this supposed threat to nature which underlies the impulse to modern warfare, in which the "stakes" are conceived to be the very future of the human species itself.

I cannot in this brief review do justice to the wealth of insights, original conceptualizations, and provocative ideas which Foucault provides. Nor indeed can I indicate the criticism which his work is bound to provoke. I can only say that it would be wrong to judge any of Foucault's work by the conventional canons of historical scholarship. His books are speculative essays, deductive in nature, reflections on the most problematical aspects of Western society, more important for what they suggest than what they prove. Foucault has consistently centred his inquiries less on specific subjects than on the ways in which subjects are marked out for study in the so-called "human sciences". He has always been concerned to disclose the operations by which the putatively normal in social life is separated from the abnormal. Like Nietzsche, his aim has always been to undermine the fetish of normality which is used to justify the mistreatment of those failing to conform to the current norm. And to judge his work by the canons of conventional scholarship would be as misplaced as criticizing *The Birth of Tragedy* for its failure to display the apparatus of classical philology.

The built-in excrescence

By John Sturrock

Robbe-Grillet: Colloque de Cerisy
Two volumes, 446 and 437pp.
Paris: Union Générale d'Editions. 16fr each.

ALAIN ROBBE-GRILLET:
La belle captive
157pp and 76 illustrations. Paris: Bibliothèque des Arts. 150fr.

The two volumes of *Robbe-Grillet* are the full, *Hansard*-style record of a colloquium held at Cerisy in the summer of 1975 and luxuriously directed by the regimental sergeant-major of the *nouveau roman*, Jean Ricardou. Only the morbidly conscientious will be driven to read every word on their nearly 900 pages. As is the rule with assemblies of this highly competitive kind, the set-pieces each head in a different direction, as Derridans, Althusserians, Metzians and other denominations present their polished interpretations of Robbe-Grillet's work, both eyes firmly sealed to the alternatives. Much of the instruction and all of the entertainment is found in the discussions which follow the prepared papers. The talk is doubly instructive and entertaining in this case because Robbe-Grillet himself was at Cerisy, and seems bravely to have attended every session. He shows supreme patience with the more opinionated and fanciful of his commentators, and great resilam and wit in debating with them. His own contributions to these volumes offer many fresh explanations of his practice both as a writer and as a film-maker.

The received idea of Robbe-Grillet is of a mechanistic, philistine writer who is hardly a literary man at all. That idea was never fair and is regularly disproved by what he has to say in *Robbe-Grillet*, where he quotes from such unexpected sources as Swift and the Bible and goes into detail over the extreme care with which he constructs his novels. He works on four versions simultaneously, each one page further advanced than its successor, and writes slowly because nothing can remain in the approved text unless the scheme justifies it. Robbe-Grillet therefore has to pick and choose between the inspirations which come as he writes, as the actually fortuitous is turned into the apparently deliberate. This is what he means by his work: "tout ce travail . . . qui me passionne de plus en plus, consiste à introduire dans un texte, et à le placer en position structurelle, un élément qui semblait une excroissance incompréhensible". Those who still shy away from Robbe-Grillet's novels should appreciate this reassurance that everything in them has its place.

This technique of *récupération* is put successfully to work in *La belle captive*, one of the two fictions which Robbe-Grillet published in 1976 (in point of fact this novel overlaps with the other, *Topologie d'une cité fantôme*, its opening section being word for word the same as the last but one section of *Topologie*; but because the two books are otherwise quite different, the two identical passages generate many different meanings). *La belle captive* is a text set, in some splendour, facing reproductions of works by Robbe-Grillet's favourite painter, the archetypal Surrealist, René Magritte. The writer takes elements from the pictures and turns them to uses of his own. The plot is erratic and inconsistent; fragments of it can be traced to Magritte's beautifully blank, suggestive images, though communications between the words and the pictures on the whole are poor. Just as Magritte is devoted to repetition and transformation—putting fins on a cigar, let's say, and creating a cigar-fish—so Robbe-Grillet alienates particular elements of his text by qualifying them differently at each reappearance.

The enemy, as he told his following at Cerisy, is "meaning". What he aims at, and more gracefully now, mostly, than before, is deeper writing, so to speak, more wide meanings, so to overfeed his readers with a mass of "information". Some bits of this information contradict other bits, so that meanings come and go as the plot circles on. What we do not know, and what there seems little hope of finding out (short of some massive and prolonged act of concentration), are the rules of selection and transformation to which Robbe-Grillet works; his humour and intelligence perhaps make up for that ultimate frustration.

He still has an ambition, so he says, to write a "popular" novel. Long ago he claimed that his novels *were* popular, or would be if only people read them with fewer preconceptions. No doubt he accepts by now that the taste for coherence and stable meanings is more stubborn than he had hoped. If one day Robbe-Grillet's novels are generally assimilated, it will at least be a sign that our traditional narrative forms are not inevitable or universal and that there are more logics than one when it comes to telling tales.

The murmur of God

By Peter Hebblethwaite

JULIEN GREEN :
La Bouteille à la Mer
456pp. Paris : Plon. 65fr.

This tenth volume of Julien Green's *Journal* covers the period from March 1972 to May 1976 and it ends, somewhat unexpectedly, with him admiring a row of houses in the Brompton Road and wondering whether to set his novel-to-be in London. In the meantime, he has looked at innumerable flats in Paris before settling down in the rue Vaneau, lamented the disintegration of the French church, been received into the Académie Française as successor to François Mauriac, listened to music after dinner, dipped into countless books, and noted the death of writers as diverse as Montherlant, Maritain, Marcel and Auden. Death tolls like a knell throughout the volume. He feels, for the first time, the skeleton through the flesh of his own body. He has always felt exiled on this earth, and is ready to go home. He keeps the world at bay : muffled reports of its horror and tragedy reach him through the radio, from the renewed bombing of Vietnam to the fall of the franc. In Vienna on October 16, 1972, he notes : "Intense cold in Paris, Portugal going Marxist, England falling apart." But such happenings do not detain him : he is concerned, as he has been throughout the ten volumes, with his spiritual development.

Green belongs to the generation of French writers who could not exist without their daily journal. He reports how Gide, characteristically, read Jean Denoël's diary at Rabat during the war, confessed his indiscretion, and then repeated it. Green seems to enjoy even as he repudiates the comparison with Gide. The great man once said to him that their common concern for truth was attributable to their Protestant background. But where, he now asks of Gide's *Journal*, is "la vérité dans ce trucage" ? The traps of absolute sincerity are well-known, and one is not sure that Green himself negotiates them all successfully. He is writing a private diary for public consumption. Yet he is delighted when a participant in a radio discussion says of him that he is not "a man of letters" and that the most striking characteristic of his *Journal* is its naturalness (*le naturel*). If Green is not a man of letters I am a Dutchman, and naturalness seems hardly compatible with the immense labour he describes as he corrects the proofs of the previous volume : he spends exhausting hours checking in dictionaries and encyclopedias, monoirs and letters.

Yet this latest volume is valuable for the retrospective light it throws on his novels and plays. He watches *L'Ennemi* on television, considers it to be the peak of his achievement and glosses it as follows : "The murder of Pierre is the killing off of the sexual instinct, the revolt of the soul against the tyranny of the senses ; the madness of Elisabeth is an escape." It is true that the alert reader might have arrived at that interpretation for himself. But the persistence of this theme in Green is most striking. At dinner one evening an Austrian brutally asks him how he reconciled his sexual life and his religious life. Green replied, naively he would have us believe, that he renounced the first in order to be able to practise the second. *L'Ennemi*, he further explains, was written in a trance-like state, and he was pleased when Mauriac described him as a medium. He was gratified when the critic Henri-Louis Parias revealed the inner movement of his novels from the hell of *Mont-Cinère* to salvation in *Autre*. If that sounds rather smug, one should remember that Green claims rather a truce than a victory, and that he would not have written at all if the conflict between instinct and religion had not existed.

Many French writers have used their diaries for a *règlement de comptes*. Green on the whole does not, but there are some fascinating anecdotes on other writers. History should recall that Claudel's dying words were : "Docteur, croyez-vous que c'est le saucisson ?" He suggests that the suicide of Montherlant was the action of the *personnage* and not the man. He is forgiving towards Gide, who could prove awkward as a guest by heading straight for the bookshelves and taking down a volume. Mauriac interests him more as a Christian than as a novelist, and an excellent anecdote illustrates his *méchanceté* but also his wit. His compliments to Mauriac in the speech to the Academy are not recorded here. In the *Journal* he is more worried by being dressed up like a toreador and wondering whether one can get away with the word *salope* before so august a body. He did. The discussions on the dictionary advance as far as the words *décolleté* (is it ever used in the masculine ?) and *décontracter*. Pierre Gaxotte encourages him with the thought that they were on the word *blanc* in 1953.

The most persistent theme of the volume is what Green sees as the collapse of the French church. It seems to him to be declining rapidly into Marxism or Protestantism. The new liturgy appals him, and he is comforted by the survival of recollection worship in Vienna. He is sympathetic towards the traditionalist aspirations of Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, though he also wishes to cling desperately to the Pope. He asserts several times that English writers are nearly always anti-papist, though after a visit to Christ Church, Oxford, he honourably modifies this largely unsubstantiated judgment. His *Journal* reflects the sadness of the convert who feels that the church to which he so painfully adhered is now radically changing its nature and betraying its heritage. The ground has shifted under his feet. He strays just this side of bitterness. "Don't talk to me about the serenity of old age", are his opening words. Unserene, uncomfortable, nonmodish, the "voice" of Green is always discreet and unemphatic, like the half-tones of psychiatric confidences. Yet he also ratches from time to time echoes of "the murmur of God which needs to accompany a human life". That is the message he sends into the bottle which he casts into the sea.

The classical complex

By Peter France

RAYMOND PICARD :
Nouveau Corpus Racinianum
527pp. Paris : Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique. 145fr.

De Racine au Parthénon
Essais sur la littérature et l'art à l'âge classique
278pp. Paris : Gallimard. 66fr.

Students of seventeenth-century French literature have long valued the late Raymond Picard's *Corpus Racinianum*. Here is a revised and augmented edition, bringing together the previously published material (including the supplements) and many new documents in a very useful compendium, a rich source of information about Racine's career and contemporary reactions to the man and his writings. It is all the more valuable a service to scholarship in that by its nature it is not a closed book, but an inclement to further research.

One might assume that the purpose of collecting such information would be to increase our understanding of Racine's tragedies. Here, however, we run into a paradox. Picard's major biographical study, *La Carrière de Jean Racine*, which uses much of the material contained in the *Corpus*, suggests that there is no important ascertainable connection between the two traditional elements of the critical biography, *l'homme* and *l'oeuvre*. At several points in *De Racine au Parthénon*, a memorial collection of his published and unpublished articles, Picard returns to the same point, modulating it from the sublime to the grotesque : "Sommes-nous étrangers à l'*Odyssée* ou au *De Natura* parce que la personnalité d'Homère ou de Lucrèce demeure obscure ? N'apprécions-nous une tarte à la crème que si elle s'accorde avec la biographie du pâtissier ?"

Many would agree with this position, which in Picard's case appears to owe a lot to Valéry. But in that case, why devote such labour to the establishment of as accurate a biography as possible ? The primary answer seems to be that it was a question of intellectual hygiene; it was important to state what was known, and no more, so as to give the lie to what inevitably had to remain speculative reconstructions of Racine's inner biography. Thus the link with Port-Royal, which is given so much stress in the very different works of Jasinski, Goldmann and Mauron, is here played down, and Racine's letters are invoked to show his "tranquille absence d'inquiétude métaphysique". It must however be said that it is not a knockdown argument to assert : "Les tragédies ne sauraient contenir de confidences personnelles, ce qui serait contraire à l'esthétique littéraire du temps ; elles sont également étrangères à l'actualité politique, ainsi que l'exige alors la vocation du genre tragique."

It was of course this insistence on the ascertainable truth which led to Picard's attack on Roland Barthes's *Sur Racine* and the ensuing "querelle". Nevertheless, the final essay in Barthes's book may help us to assess the value of Picard's work. Barthes distinguishes with perhaps excessive neatness between literary criticism and literary history : the former interprets texts for today, the latter seeks to describe the institution of literature at different times in the past. Picard did not accept the freedom of criticism, and asserted that there are certain unchanging truths about works of the past. So in *De Racine au Parthénon* he criticizes modern producers for dealing carelessly with classical plays and failing to respect the genre distinctions which presided over their creation. Similarly, he insists that the Parthenon needs to be thought of in its original multi-coloured splendour rather than in its pure whiteness to which it has been reduced by passing time and modern preoccupations.

This "archaeological" position has its appeal, pointing as it does to the foreignness of the classics. It does, however, tend to limit the critic or producer to the repetition of familiar interpretations. It is surprising then if even the most historically-minded critic is not led into certain modern inflections. Picard's notion of tragedy, for instance, clearly echos ideological currents of our own time, as does his stress on the central cultural significance of Racine's art. The metaphysics today underlying much of his book is brought into the open in the prefatory tribute from Thierry Maulnier, who speaks of his defense de ce qui semble bien considérer comme allant plus haut et les plus certaines valeurs littéraires françaises, contre ceux qui les ignorait, les méprisait, prétendait les rejeter hors du présent".

It is history rather than criticism which is Picard's forte. Much of what he writes about texts such as *La Princesse de Clèves*, *Manon Lescaut* or even *Andromaque* is disappointing, but he is in his element when he leads us into the variety and complexity of literary and artistic life and taste in the seventeenth century, describing the contradictory tendencies which coexisted in what we call "Classicisme classique". One of the most successful pieces in this respect seems to me to be the article "Racine et Chauveau", where he discusses the original illustrations of Racine's plays and the relations between the different currents of taste embodied in 'texte and image. His knowledge of the period was broad and deep, and such detailed investigations are a valuable contribution to the understanding of French literature and culture in the seventeenth century.

Doubts and certainties

By Graham Martin

ALAIN BOSQUET :
Le Livre du doute et de la grâce
212pp. Paris : Gallimard. 35fr.

MARC GUYON :
Ce qui chante dans le chant
130pp. Paris : Gallimard. 29fr.

JEAN CAYROL :
Poésie Journal II
190pp. Paris : Seuil. 29fr.

Alain Bosquet's new collection, *Le Livre du doute et de la grâce*, is one of his best. Its meditative nature renders the images sparser than usual, perhaps, but no less arresting ; and it has M. Bosquet's customary qualities of compression and incisive wit, as well as a deep undertow of pain and disquiet. It opens with a series of aphorisms, where a sincere doubt is expressed with a glittering agility ; and closes with a long "Letter to an Absent God", which is a conversation between the poet and a destructive universe—a universe which all the dexterities of mind and feeling cannot suffice to comprehend or to forgive. The poem is both witty and moving.

A poem called "The Raft" may give some notion of the quality of M. Bosquet's brief fables. A man plies his raft between the opposite banks of sadness and happiness, collecting gods as he goes. At the end of his life, finding himself on the bank of sadness, he unties his raft from the shore and drowns his gods. Solitude, the despair of approaching death, the fact that the man is now marooned upon the wrong shore—these are unstated, but emerge like a sombre background. This is a book suffused with ironies that are often bitter and always courageous.

Marc Guyon's third collection shares similar concerns. After a group of "prose-poems" full of dreamlike images, and a long love poem of impressive seriousness, the third sequence of poems in *Ce qui chante dans le chant* poses questions of meaning in human life and the world. M. Guyon has a meticulous diction and rhythmic control, a sober and detached tone, and his work is shot through with precise, sombre images. His occasional "landscapes" rise at times to a grave splendour, into which no false rhetoric intrudes.

This poetry questions rather than asserts, for the "Beloved" is absent. And what can be said of human understanding and human words ? "They build a little window on the world." Yet the third and fourth sequences in M. Guyon's book close on the assertion of small joys and certainties : of water to be drunk, of crickets in the cycle of summer, and of the sail of a boat swelling in the wind.

Jean Cayrol's second *Poésie Journal* (his first dealt with the events of 1968) is concerned much more closely with the here and now. It is the poet's diary for 1975-76. Brief, elliptical, lyrical sentences are sown loosely together with irregular rhymes; the constant splatter of news against the screen of the poet's television set, provokes a haphazard series of meditations and ironic comments. A curious effect results: world events, the acts and words of politicians, are reduced to their proper stature: they are, however ruinous, bloody or absurd, merely the background to the intimate experience and understanding of each observing consciousness.

If only the politicians themselves could understand this: "Stop the massacre", writes M. Cayrol, "let the world proceed towards its dawn." For the real world is not to be found in the newspapers. At the end of his long poem, the poet returns with relief from the news to the French countryside. "Man has been long dead", and "Presidents are not made for the open wind".

M Cayrol's new poem is a fascinating exercise in form, but also in the nature of poetry: which of its essence is a critique of reality, a scale against which to measure experience. The poet's refusal to take up a point of view on the events he mentions puts them in proper perspective: history, as the Chinese knew, is best when it is happening somewhere else.

The ambitions of Baudelaire

By Alison Fairlie

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE :
Oeuvres complètes
Edited by Claude Pichois
Volume 1: 1,604pp.
Volume 2: 1,691pp.
Paris : Gallimard. 120fr each.

The publication of this fundamentally new Pléiade edition of Baudelaire is a major event. These two volumes are not simply the latest revision of a work which has come to be, in successive versions, both the prized possession of many non-academic readers and a standard text for scholars ; they mark a deliberate change in editorial principles.

In 1931, when Baudelaire (then edited by Y.-G. Le Dantec) was the first author to be chosen for the Pléiade, that series was intended to give the general reader, in convenient compass and fine format, a reliable text and variants, with minimal annotation. During the near half-century since, factual and textual discoveries have progressed ; critical illuminations (or sometimes obfuscations) have proliferated. Claude Pichois, who from the 1960s has been responsible for succinctly and skilfully incorporating corrections and additions into successive editions, has now undertaken a total revision. While still intending these volumes for "le grand public", he sets out to provide, for each of Baudelaire's works, a detailed survey of existing knowledge and a personal approach to recent critical judgments.

Clearly a titanic task, and one which requires very tricky decisions as to just what choice from the superabundant material may best fit the needs of these two mythically separated entities—general reader and dedicated scholar. M Pichois's exceptional breadth of experience qualifies him for the challenge. Over the years, the Pléiade Baudelaire has moved from two volumes to the highly convenient single-volume edition, and now back to two. In Volume 1 are the main creative works—poems, translations of poems, prose poems ; studies on hashish and opium ; essays and short stories ; plans for the theatre ; the so-called diaries and the notebooks ; in Volume 2, the critical writings on literature, the visual arts and music ; the material on Belgium ; and finally a selection of newspaper articles. Within the main sections, the order is, as far as possible, chronological. Texts and variants have been collated with all known manuscripts, proofs or editions. If comparisons with facsimiles, or internal evidence, may occasionally suggest slightly different readings, this is certainly, overall, the text which comes closest to Baudelaire's intentions.

One subsidiary but strongly felt process might be raised by those to whom, as to Baudelaire, visual presentation of the poem on the page affects its impact. In all previous Pléiade editions the principle subsisted that the poems (differently treated from the prose work) should remain free of numerical references to footnotes. The text of the poems now not only bristles with figures and italic letters (at once too large to be unobtrusive and too tiny for rapid consultation) ; it has also been numbered by fives in the margin, so that in some lines of poetry the last word has had to be skied or dropped. The effect of sudden hiccup this produces, even if one appreciates the editorial problems, and those of coherence within a series, may leave readers nostalgic for the past uncluttered text of the poems.

No one will expect startling discoveries of unknown writings, but this edition adds both some new material and some which up to now could be consulted only in scattered specialist publications: we have, to take a few examples, one or two very early poems ; the schoolboy's Latin verses ; the intriguing if unsuccessful effort at a prose translation of Longfellow's *Hiawatha* ; marginal annotations on books read ; notes on literary predecessors for defence at the trial ; a complete reading (established jointly with Jean Ziegler) of the *Carnets* ; a partly new selection of works attributed to Baudelaire or written in collaboration. This is the only edition to include, at the end of Volume 2, examples of the kind of journalism to which Baudelaire contributed in the late 1840s, some scurrilous and frivolous, some of serious political moment. Definite attribution remains hypothetical (as M Pichois indicates in his thoughtful caveat) ; the choice gives a sense of the atmosphere and problems of the period. Two additions to past Pléiade volumes are especially welcome. First, the bold innovation of reproducing, complete with its lively illustrations, the *Salon caricatural de 1846* (where again Baudelaire's contribution remains conjectural) ; second, and most important of all, the inclusion of all Baudelaire's introductions to his Poe translations.

It is of course the new notes which are the nub of this edition. What were once 300 pages of elucidation have now swelled to over 1,500, providing a treasure-house—and a treasure-hunt. No one will expect M Pichois to mince words, whether in praise or in blame. Faced by the increasingly intractable problem of choosing from the sheer bulk of Baudelairian bibliography, he has decided to mention only works held to deserve discussion ; in a typically elegant and provocative aside he remarks that, given the flood of present publications, authors he omits may feel free to attribute their absence to "un tel oubli" rather than to intended condemnation.

Very many readers will undoubtedly appreciate the thoughtful and challenging introductions to each section, and, in the notes, the swift, skilful summaries of vast swathes of critical controversy (eight pages of small print on responses to the Lévi-Strauss/Roman Jakobson dissection of "Les Chats" ; twelve on "Correspondances", etc). Is there a danger that, precisely because of the richness of annotation (with direct quotation from recent articles running to some length), some may misinterpret the editor's intentions by imagining that he has provided a conveniently predigested compendium of All We Need to Know ? His introductions make generous reference to certain major predecessors or contemporaries (Crépet, Pommier, Prévost, Blin, Baudy, Austin, Leakey and others) and to such younger scholars as D. J. Kelley ; in selecting salient points, whether from these, from his own critical editions, or from those by his disciples (Robert Kopp on the prose poems, Michèle Stäuble on de Quincey) he has clearly decided not to pre-empt the full detail offered elsewhere.

The treasure-hunt is guided by six valuable indexes. Four, established by Vincenette Pichois (characters, place-names, periodicals, allegories and personifications), are skilled in the expert indexer's art of catching up allusions where the name itself is not mentioned; an interesting reference to Mallarmé is among a few which have been overlooked. Jean Ziegler lists information on individuals mentioned in the *Carnets*, and M Pichois himself compiles highly helpful summaries on painters, sculptors and engravers, indicating also where reproductions of their works may be seen in recent studies. Occasional omissions or minor misprints will easily be rectified in future editions—where all readers will fervently hope that the indexes, and the select bibliographies, may be extended to cover the very rich resources of the notes as well as simply Baudelaire's texts.

From these rich resources, what main suggestions emerge? Baudelaire's creative ambition, rather than the sexual or religious problems so much studied hitherto, is taken as the nodal point ; his will to writing as the proof of worth turns to experimentation with widely differing genres in which sudden success had been achieved by contemporaries (short story, theatre, novel, essay, *chanson* . . .). Abortive plans and near-failures may often illuminate his greatest works. There is also the need to see him not as our own "timeless" contemporary but as an individual, subject to changing views, and experimenting with the themes, conventions and vocabulary of his period.

The *Fleurs du Mal* are of course the most fully discussed. In the excellent conclusion to his "notice" on the poems, after an inspiriting attack on the kind of criticism which assumes an inflated value for its own lucubrations and may smother rather than discover, M Pichois suggests that what has been most neglected is a proper study of Baudelaire's own thoughts on the deeply-rooted and subtle powers of prosody. The need to sum up existing work, where suppositions about which woman a given poem was "written for" have waxed so rife (here, a welcome scepticism has been directed at some lingering pseudo-biographical myths) has left relatively little space in the notes for close analysis. Since the first volume of the present Pléiade appeared, there has been much welcome new work on those sound-effects which its editor suggests as vital.

"Sources" are out of favour today, but, if M Pichois pares away some of the wilder suppositions of the past, he goes to no fashionable extremes, but fully realizes both Baudelaire's retentive memory and his love of weaving suggestive variations on inherited themes. There are telling remarks on parallels with Gautier, Nerval, Sainte-Beuve and Hugo, and above all on Baudelaire's pre-Proustian skill in deliberate "pastiche d'admiration".

Among very many seminal guides is the observation that foreigners find it easier than the French to appreciate the *Petits Poèmes en Prose* (here given their alternative title *Le Spleen de Paris*). Is this perhaps because foreigners are less tied to the two French traditions, first, of setting new experiment under headings—classicism, romanticism, realism (traces of this intellectual game, skilfully played, survive in this edition) and second, of creating a hierarchy of genres (a tradition which caused Baudelaire himself, both in literature and criticism, some of his most productive struggles)? The startlingly original and disconcertingly varied forms of the *Petits Poèmes en Prose* still await full analysis, as do many sides of Baudelaire's creative art in prose : the hyper-conscious irony in the short story "La Fanfarlo" ; the deceptively informal penetration of the essay on toys ; the balance of analytical and evocative power in the *Paradis artificiels* ; the intensely individual use of language in the art criticism. The present edition offers constant incitement.

Baudelaire's adaptation of De Quincey is seen as a rare example of how a foreign work may be acclimatized in France—as with Galland's version of the *Arabian Nights*. In the literary criticism, the *Madame Bovary* article is singled out for its art of imaginative identification ; we have also a valuable exposition of the facts and pressures behind articles written for a contemporary anthology of poetry. The way is now open, long years after Margaret Gilliman's fine study, for a new appreciation of Baudelaire's critical skills as drawing challenge from importunate circumstance : how his persistent and passionate analysis of interaction between author and public determines the means to success, deserved or undeserved ; his ability to play subtly on insinuation, irony or pastiche so as to convey pointed reservations without undermining either personal enthusiasm or reflective principle.

The same complexities underlie the art criticism, increasingly seen today as revealing more of Baudelaire than necessarily of the artists concerned. His gradual formulation of ideas around that most slippery of all terms, "modernité", is reassessed, as are his varying views on major artists (Delacroix, Ingres, Daumier, Courbet, Moryon, Manet), and on individuals, major or minor, to whom the poet attributes the qualities he himself most longs to possess. Traditional surprise subsists around Baudelaire's choice of Constantin Guys : Guys who fascinated him partly through the suggestions inherent in ephemeral modes, partly through command of a swiftly executed and immediately communicative stylization, however dangerously near to stereotype.

In the section on music, the Wagner article, fully set in its background, is shown as focusing and extending Baudelaire's major and manifold preoccupations at a particularly creative period of his life. From early years, two persistent threads interweave in his thinking : the search for underlying unity behind the different art forms, and the deep suspicion of any false or blurring impingements of one on the other.

In the personal notebooks, with their interplay of insight and aggression, principle and paradox, this edition brings out the very differing intentions behind Baudelaire's different headings: *Fusées*, *Mon Coeur mis à nu*, *Hygiène*. The copious notes for the projected book on Belgium are sifted and explained (for complete details of the newspaper cuttings which Baudelaire collected often as much for style as for substance, the scholar will go back to the Crépet-Pichois edition). If, in this last of Baudelaire's efforts, much spins off as the spume of an exasperated sensibility consciously facing final crisis, yet it holds also the poet's last experiences of fragile tranquillity or renewed aesthetic discovery.

The Pléiade edition has now added multiple concordances to the text. Readers of very different interests will owe a deep debt of gratitude to the editor, whether for the prolonged, patient scholarship which has given us the most complete and accurate existing presentation of the collected texts, or for the vital stimulus to new discussion and discovery offered in his firm personal assessments. This new edition suggests more clearly than ever before both the interdependence of Baudelaire's widespread experiments, and the ways in which his masterpieces typify yet transcend the particular pressures of his times.

The retreat of faith

By Gordon Wright

GABRIEL LE BRAS :
L'Eglise et le village
289pp. Paris: Flammarion. 48fr.

For the traveller in France who ventures off the autoroute and plunges, without map or Michelin, into the back country, there are likely to be some surprises, occasional disappointments, and frequent rewards. Now and then he may still find a charming country inn or a tiny undiscovered restaurant whose proprietor-chef has never heard of fast food. A more dependable delight, however, is the panorama that often greets the wanderer on rounding a turn or topping a rise: a small village nestled in a valley or starkly outlined against the sky, as though arranged by design for the old-fashioned landscapist or the amateur photographer with a taste for rustic charm. And always dominating the little community, the spire or tower of the village church, topped by a weathered cross or, less commonly, by a weathervane in the shape of a Gallic cock. True, a closer approach may reveal some flaws in this idyllic scene: closed and shuttered shops, aging inhabitants, signs of decay that betray the rapid disintegration of this seemingly timeless community. Even the church, for centuries the central focus of village life, may turn out to be a crumbling ruin, barely fit to shelter a tiny remnant of worshippers on the rare occasions when a peripatetic priest chugs into town in his deux-chevaux.

It is the changing role of the village church that the late Gabriel Le Bras, former doyen of the Paris law faculty and pioneer in the field of religious sociology, has set out to portray in his posthumously-published L'Eglise et le village. Such a project was first suggested to Le Bras in 1925 by Marc Bloch, who had in mind a history of the rural church in France. A half-century later, after long interruptions and basic conceptual changes, the book emerges as a study focused on the present and the recent past. But while the author's design is to show what has happened to the village church (both the structure and the institution) in his own lifetime, he frequently dips back into the longer-range past for purposes of explanation and contrast. Indeed, some of the most intriguing details are drawn from the record of those earlier centuries when church and curé could claim to be at the very centre of communal life.

Le Bras makes no claim to originality in this work; it rests, he says, on "thousands" of parish monographs of variable value and on studies buried in obscure regional reviews. Many of these are cited, but he has also drawn extensively on a lifetime of direct observation and on details provided by friends and acquaintances. The product of all this is a highly personal essay, almost a memoir at times, in which the author seems to be reminiscing informally as his readers relax before the fire. If this is sociology or social history, it is free of the jargon, the pretentiousness, and the cold aloofness that sometimes mark the genre.

Although Le Bras is concerned (as any historian must be) with both continuity and change, it is change that constitutes the leitmotif of this book. Since 1900, almost everything has been transformed: the composition, recruitment, and outlook of the clergy; the status and functions of clerical and lay auxiliaries; the relationship between the curé and the mayor; the schoolmaster, the parish council; even the role of religious belief and practice in the villagers' daily lives.

Priests, once recruited mainly from rural areas, now come most often from the towns and cities. Their education has been modernized, their mental horizons broadened. While their duties have grown heavier, their support from auxiliary clerics and devoted laymen has declined. Their living standard hovers at the subsistence level; some make ends meet by performing odd jobs on the side. The old fabriques, elective units of local church government that gave the laity considerable influence over the curé, disappeared early in our century (for reasons that are not explained); they have been replaced by parish councils possessing only advisory powers. The ancient confréries have withered away too, though a few barely manage to survive. A majority of villages no longer have a resident curé; the growing practice is to station a cluster of priests in some market town, and to send individual members round at intervals, like the old circuit riders.

Le Bras concludes from all this that the church's role in rural France, which had been shrinking steadily ever since the Revolution, is gravely threatened, and that the institutional structure of the village, "cette petite république chrétienne", faces total atrophy. With an absentee priest who whizzes in and out of town for an occasional mass, ministering to an increasingly secularized and indifferent flock, does Christianity itself have a future in the rural areas? At one point, Le Bras is even led to ask sadly, "Has our countryside, in fact, ever been Christianized? . . . I doubt that the masses have ever been truly transformed by a religion preached for all men but accessible to only a few".

Notwithstanding, he clings to faith and hope. On balance, he concludes, the new teams of circuit-riding priests may be the best device at a time when so many villages have been seriously depopulated. Priestly training, generally mediocre in the past, now prepares the clergy for more effective action in a secularized society. Within the village, the old tensions between the curé and the mayor, the schoolmaster, the Protestant pastor have been muted or forgotten; the change represents, in Le Bras's view, "un véritable progrès de l'humanité dans le village". The deeper problem, he believes, can be found in the "dislocation" of the peasant family, the bureaucratizing of the commune, and the general relaxation of moral standards.

The carnival spirit

By Gwynne Lewis

MICHEL VOVELLE :
Les Métamorphoses de la fête en Provence de 1750 à 1820
300pp. Paris: Aubier/Flammarion. 78fr.

Michel Vovelle's recent work is a very restrained celebration of what Maurice Agulhon has called "la sociabilité méridionale". The book forms part of a series, edited by Jacques Le Goff, entitled Bibliothèque d'Ethnologie Historique, which introduces us to the brave new world of "ethno-history". Given that this most recent liaison in the relatively short history of shotgun marriages between history and the social sciences is, unequivocally, a *science de l'Homme*, joy is tightly confined between the boundaries of the mandatory maps, graphs, statistics and scientific jargon.

Once initiated as a disciple of "ethno-history" however, there are rewards. Professor Vovelle's methodological approach entails the study of history "à la longue durée", revealing the challenge of an increasingly profane and rational age to the survival of the traditional *fête*. The Enlightenment, despising its "feudal" and "popular" image, prepares the *fête* for the shock of the Revolution. The *fête révolutionnaire* between 1789 and 1799, however, succeeds: only where and when it draws upon the heritage of the past. But just as the *fête révolutionnaire* was inevitably to be influenced by precedent, so the *fête traditionelle* which re-emerged gradually after 1799 could never be the same again. By the 1820s the *fête* in Provence, like the restored Bourbon dynasty, was, if not a shadow of its former self, then certainly lacking the substance of happier days. As far the *fête révolutionnaire*, well, according to the author, like some Sorelian myth, "elle n'a pas fini de faire rêver".

During the 1780s over 400 different *fêtes* existed in Provence, concentrated in and around Aix, Tarascon, Sainte-Maxime in Basse-Provence, Sisteron, Forcalquier, Sault and Apt in Haute-Provence. Professor Vovelle leads us to the dance through "la fête carnavesque" "le train" "la bravade" (Very popular in Saint-Tropez before Brigitte Bardot introduced a more modern folklore) and the most widespread and religious of village *fêtes*, "le vœu Avignon", so many heart-beats of the cultural life of eighteenth-century Provence. May, as in pagan times, marked the beginning of the joyful season: residual paganism also in celebrations such as the "fête de Saint-Jean" which culminated in the collection of magic herbs at dawn's first light. For obvious reasons the number of *fêtes* declined in July and early August, rising thereafter to reach a new peak in September. There were saints for every type of worker—the ubiquitous Saint-Eloi for agricultural workers, Saint-Pierre for fishermen, Saint-Joseph for carpenters. The more elaborate *fêtes*, particularly in the towns, could last for days, moving, according to a time-honoured pattern, through the preparatory and sacred phases to the profane pleasures of singing, dancing and drinking, often culminating in the more lubricious excesses consequent upon these indulgences.

However, long before the Revolution, clerics, municipal consuls and *littérateurs* were becoming increasingly censorious of the spontaneous and more primitive expression of the *fête traditionelle*: regrettably for some, "la dense attire plus que le dévotion". Metamorphosis then established through the declining number of winter *fêtes*, changes of date to accommodate a more organized and public calendar and the take-over bids made by the professional *confréries*. It was time, in the dialectical sense, for the mob to be put in its proper, and less exuberant, place.

The Revolution provided a new model, more politicized, urbanized and, in some ways, more democratic. Professor Vovelle has collected and analysed over 600 *fêtes révolutionnaires*, the early *fêtes* de la fédération" until 1791-92 representing little more than revolutionary imitations of the old "bravades" or "réjouissances". During the Year II, however, flooded by "sociétés populaires" and "représentants en mission", the *fêtes* became an important channel of communication, preaching the virtues of the Revolution through song, symbol and verse. As Professor Vovelle says, the *provençaux* learnt to *sing* the Revolution.

Anticlerical *fêtes* wreaked a rare havoc on those clerics who had sought to moralize the *fêtes* before 1789: as donkeys, their ears decked with bishop's mitres, brayed out the message of anticlericalism, again, to a predominantly urban audience. During the Year II the *fêtes* undoubtedly awakened a popular response; under the Directory, from 1795 to 1799, they became cratic, formalized and didactic character of the *fêtes* alienated all but the faithful, and there were so many of them by 1799.

The Napoleonic period witnessed the slow and painful recovery of the village *fêtes* as well as the continuance of the more official sort of *fêtes* glorifying the virtues of the Bonaparte clan. With the restoration of Bourbons in 1814 "la sociabilité méridionale" could be expressed once again in all its excellent glory. Or could it? In reality, says Professor Vovelle. There were far fewer *fêtes* by the 1820s; the timing of them had changed, grouping around June and August; the clergy and municipalities were losing their influence to those who benefited economically from the *fêtes*, inn-keepers and shop owners. Also, collective joy was being atomized and domesticated.

As one contemporary put it: "à la vie collectivique s'est substituée sous quelques rapports, la vie sociale n'offre ni les mêmes attraits ni les mêmes avantages que dans le bon vieux temps." At Sourribes the bride was still escorted by the villagers in the 1830s, but in a less self-conscious suffer. Professor Vovelle argues that the experience of the Revolution, of "la fête du temps court" helped to dispel the originality of the traditional fête, already weakened, particularly in the towns, by the laicisation and "banalisation" of public life.

Professor Vovelle's work dramatizes the dimensions of the recent change from national to provincial history, from "still-pictures" of the life of a commune or revolutionary *commissaire* in the Year II to history "à la longue durée". The breadth of his source material—the *fonds* of the Musée Calvet as well as those of the *archives départementales*—inspires confidence. It is a pity that there are more statistics, people in the book; that interesting *conjonctures*, such as the relationship between the strength of Catholic royalism and the efflorescence of rural *fêtes* towards the end of the Directory, are so fully explored, but this is a secondary, if schematic, work which complements the recent pioneering studies of Maurice Agulhon and Mona Ozouf on the cultural history of Provence and the significance of the *fête*.

The historian as auditor

By Theodore Zeldin

FERNAND BRAUDEL and ERNEST LABROUSSE (Editors) :
Histoire économique et sociale de la France
Tome 3 : L'Avènement de l'ère industrielle (1789—années 1880)
Two volumes. 1,136pp. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France. 315 fr the set.

One cannot judge a country's achievement from its textbooks, any more than one can from its encyclopedias. But one can learn a certain amount from them. They enable one to place in their context such phenomena as the *Annales* school of historians (a phrase I use only because it is familiar, but it covers far too much to be really useful).

At the same time as the people associated with this school were broadening the scope of history, French historians were being threatened with a loss of influence because of their persistent parochialism, and this has not quite disappeared. One of the most striking features of French historical writing was—and remains—its concentration on French history. The vast majority of French historians are historians of France. This was justifiable when France was a great power. It is justifiable also because the sources of French history are so rich, and France has been a literate country for so long that one can do things in French history that one can do in very few other countries. One can ask, and find answers to, complex, universal questions. But interest in France is inevitably diminishing as attention turns away from Europe.

The French could try to palliate this by making use of their powers of synthesis, to digest the results of other nation's researches and to draw out their significance. They have sometimes succeeded in doing this. Their general histories have on occasion been enterprising and original. Lavisse and Rambaud's *Histoire Générale* (1892, twelve volumes) has never acquired the status of the old Cambridge Histories, and is now, unlike them, very seldom consulted, but *Peuples et Civilisations* (1926-45, twenty volumes, new twenty-two-volume edition in progress), though less detailed than the Cambridge Histories, has often been more lively, more suggestive, more exciting. The Clio series (started in 1934 and now being revised), with its stress on controversial issues, recent research and with its interesting bibliographical discussions, has been much used abroad, because it represented, perhaps better than any one series for students, the enthusiasm and pioneering spirit generated by the recent expansion of historical research. But there is a limit to what scholars can achieve in writing about countries whose language they do not know, however brilliant their style.

Rather strangely, the French have not used their powers of synthesis all that much on their own history. The standard work was for long Lavisse's *Histoire de la France* and *Histoire de la France contemporaine* in nineteen volumes (1905-22). This was a most impressive achievement of erudition, which still retains its value. Perhaps that is the reason why there has been no attempt to replace it, perhaps the comprehensive series is an outdated idea. Recently Le Seuil started its *Nouvelle histoire de la France contemporaine*, covering the past two centuries in eighteen volumes (short paperback ones). This has offered scope for a wide variety of talents and for different approaches; it is a recognition that the best work is now the work of specialists, and that a successful series cannot any longer try to be uniform.

Instead of trying to cover the whole of French history in one series, there now seems to be a tendency to produce a number of specialized collaborative works, each dealing with different aspects. This is certainly a sensible reflection of the growing compartmentalization of historical study, and an improvement on the older practice of giving a chapter or two at the end of general chronologies, to such supposedly peripheral subjects as art and literature. The result has been a valuable history of the French press (1969-76, five volumes), unparalleled in any country and which is, in parts, very original. There have been useful "collections" in Socialism, Protestantism, science, technology, etc. Now Fernand Braudel and Ernest Labrousse are bringing near to completion the *Histoire économique et sociale de la France*. The latest two volumes, covering the years 1789 to 1880, have just appeared under Labrousse's editorship.

These volumes are a monument to the influence and importance of Labrousse in France since the war. The study of modern French history has been dominated by him, not quite in the same way that Durkheim dominated French sociology at the beginning of the century, but very forcibly all the same. France's senior professors of modern history today are nearly all his pupils; the younger generation, though they have often gone in different ways, and protest their independence, keep their respect for him; he is their spiritual grandfather.

The work in these volumes reflects the direction that Labrousse has given to much of the research carried out since 1945. His thesis on the *Crisis of the French Economy at the End of the Ancien Régime and the Beginning of the French Revolution* (1944) brought a totally new precision to the study of economic history. The contrast with Tocqueville's brilliant but largely intuitive generalizations could not be more complete. Labrousse has laid the investigation of archives which had hitherto been almost totally neglected, despite, or possibly because of, their massive bulk. Simiand had shown the way, but he was more of an economist, using history to discover general laws. It was Labrousse who made the economic data subservient to history.

The discovery of this data, and the development of methods to cope with it, represent a minor technological revolution in historiography. The materials collected for the *Statistique de la France* have been supplemented by the *Mercuriales* (the detailed records of local prices, in France provincial and individual markets, probably one of the richest such archives in the world), the records of the *cadastre* (recording the ownership of every single plot of land), those of the *enregistrement* (whose documents on inheritance, gifts and marriage constitute the largest single collection of manuscripts in France), and finally those of the *notaires* (where wills and private legal contracts provide an inexhaustible insight into private as well as commercial life).

The stress of Labrousse's work has been on the history of prices, and the study of *conjonctures*. His disciples have pushed on into the history of profits, production, the distribution of income and capital, and have brought to a successful conclusion the laborious task of building up annual indexes covering the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The emphasis here is on these questions. At the end of the book, Labrousse discusses the graphs they have produced in what is a most valuable summing up of the work of a generation. Everything he writes is careful and thoughtful, and it invites careful thought.

There is important original work here, as well. Lévy-Leboyer, professor at Nanterre, has, for example, contributed three most interesting chapters on credit, money and the development of the banking system. It is a pity no footnotes have been allowed, for he has clearly gone back to original sources, which historians have hitherto been unable to penetrate: the freshness of his approach is invigorating, and his conclusions will require the revision of all that has previously been said on this subject.

This is the first general economic history of France to appear since that of Henri Sée (which was first published in German in the 1930s, and came out in French in 1951). It is valuable to have a new survey of the country's industrialization, making use of the very considerable research that has been carried out since then; Pierre Léon's chapters will in future be indispensable reading for the student.

There are also rather less original contributions, like the chapter on foreign trade. This is perfectly competent, and it brings the studies together very usefully, but it is in fact written by an expert on foreign investment in Spain, who was called in at the last moment to substitute for the person who had intended to write it but who could not find the time. There are major questions about France's exports, for example, which remain unanswered. When nine authorities combine in a work of this kind, there must inevitably be parts where they are simply repeating in a new form what they have said (at greater length) in other publications.

However, the most surprising feature of the book is that it is so weak on the social side. Less than 200 pages were left for this, divided between Robert Laurent on the peasants, Jean Bruhat on the workers, and Adeline Daumard on the middle classes. So there is no sample of the work of Maurice Agulhon, Louis Chevalier, or Michel Vovelle, for example, and what is worse, there are very few hints of the new perspectives that they have opened up. The editor is well aware of these lacunae; he has written very perceptively on social history himself; but he decided that he would have needed more space than the publisher allowed to cover this properly. He preferred to concentrate on the economic side.

My own view is that it should have been admitted that, for this period at any rate, social and economic history have become virtually independent disciplines. Labrousse would not agree with this. But there are few historians left who, like him, are capable of dealing with both. Adeline Daumard, he would reply, is such a one. That is true. But, even so, she concentrates mainly on sources that are essentially economic, dealing above all with monetary relationships. Her achievements with these command general admiration, indeed amazement that she should have been able to go through so many archival sources, and with such interesting and wide-ranging results. However, the historians who study women's magazines, or sport, or health, or sociability, or education, work with such a wide range of materials that they are becoming almost as distinct as, say, inorganic and organic chemists have become. It may be regrettable, but it is inevitable.

The questions that interest economic historians have become specialized. Lévy-Leboyer is too busy with general trends to give even a potted biography of any of the bankers whose activities he analyses, because he is concerned with economic problems. The section on peasants here is nowhere near as rich, or as broad, as the new *Histoire rurale de la France* (Le Seuil, 1975-76, three volumes). The beautiful illustrations thus do not harmonize with the text. Millet's paintings are reproduced, but no analysis offered of his significance; there is a print of a strike at Le Creusot, but no study of the career of Schneider. Even the reader who wants to know about individual firms, or about particular inventors, will have to look elsewhere. (He will, in fact, not find very much elsewhere. The French are distinctly backward when it comes to biography—economic, social or anything else. But things are changing; a new biographical dictionary of notables is being planned, to parallel one on participants in the working-class movement now in process of being published.)

This is an incomplete monument to Labrousse's talents, but I believe, given his limited space, that he was right to concentrate on the subjects in which he and his team were most interested. No general work can be comprehensive any longer, at least if it is to avoid superficiality. It is an excellent thing that another nail has been driven into the coffin of the general textbook, which is to history what a badly printed, much reduced reproduction is to an original painting.

At the moment, French history is in a stage where its most valuable contributions are the work of particular enthusiasms, and the obsessions of small groups of friends. French historians today are, I think, more talented than they have ever been, and there are far more talented people in the profession than ever before. So it is still true that a historian of any nationality who wishes to keep abreast of new ideas and to expand his horizons must follow what is going on in French historical writing today.

The complete text for the film *Sarra par lui-même*, directed by Alexandre Astruc and Michel Contat, and discussed by Douglas Johnson in *TLS* Commentary (November 12, 1976) has now been published by Gallimard (137pp. 30fr).

Technology and the composer

By Pierre Boulez

invention, in music, is often subject to prohibitions and taboos which it would be dangerous to transgress. Invention must remain the private, exclusive property of genius, or at least of talent. Indeed it is hard to find any purely rational explanation for it; by summoning up unpredictable results out of nothing it escapes analysis. But is this nothing really the total void appropriate to miracle-workers? And does the unpredictable come to exist in a totally unpredicted context? Invention cannot exist in the abstract, it originates in contact with music of the past, be it only the recent past; it exists through reflection on its direct or indirect ancestors. Such reflection concentrates naturally on the spiritual approach, the mental mechanisms and the intellectual development displayed by the work it takes as its models, but it concentrates also on the sound material itself, without whose support music cannot exist; musical material has evolved over the centuries, providing for each age a typical sound profile that is continually renewed—slowly perhaps, but inevitably.

Yet invention is faced today with a number of problems particularly concerned with the relation between the conception, we might even say the vision, of the composer and the realization in sound of his ideas. For some time now, the composer's mental approach, his "wild" invention, has been free to follow very different paths from those that the medium, the sound material, can offer him. This divergence has caused blockages dangerous enough for invention to lose all its spontaneity; when either the material or the idea develops independently, unconcerned whether or not they coincide, a serious imbalance develops, to the detriment of the work, which is jugged this way and that between false priorities. Underlying these blockages there are undoubtedly causes which are beyond the composer's power and over which he has little control, but of which he is—or should be—aware if he is to try to overcome them.

We think at once of blockages of a social kind. Since at least the beginning of this century, our culture has been oriented towards historicism and conservation. As though by a defensive reflex, the greater and more powerful our technological progress, the more timidly has our culture retracted to what it sees as the immutable and imperishable values of the past. And since a larger—though still limited—section of society has easier access to musical culture, having more leisure and spending power, and since modes of transmission have increased enormously and at the same time are cheaper, the consumption of music has considerably increased. This leads to a growing boredom with pieces that are frequently heard and repeated, and to a search for an alternative repertoire—one within the same radius of action as the well-known works and providing a series of substitutes for them. Only too rarely does it lead to a genuine broadening of the repertoire by giving fresh life to works which had become the exclusive property of libraries. The search for historical curiosities of interpretation also serves to divert energies which are all too likely to be swallowed up by it. Thus the "museum" has become the centre of musical life, together with the almost obsessive preoccupation with reproducing as faithfully as possible all the conditions of the past. This exclusive historicism is a revealing symptom of the dangers a culture runs when it confesses its own poverty so openly: it is engaged not in making models, nor in destroying them in order to create fresh ones, but in reconstructing them and venerating them like totems, as symbols of a golden age which has been totally abolished.

Among other consequences, a historicizing culture has almost completely blocked the evolution of musical instruments, which have come to a disastrous halt for both social and economic reasons. The great channels of musical consumption which exploit, almost exclusively, the works of the past consequently use the means of transmission appropriate to the past, when they were at their most effective. It is hardly necessary to add that this state of affairs is faithfully reflected in education, where the models selected for teaching are drawn from an extremely circumscribed period in the history of music, and consequently limits—from the outset—the techniques and sound material at the musician's disposal; even more disastrously, they give him a restricted outlook whereby his education becomes a definitive, absolute possession. The makers of musical instruments, having no vocation for economic suicide, meet the narrow demands made on them; they are interested only in fiddling about with established models and so lose all chance of inventing or transforming. Wherever there is an active market, in which economic demand has free play—in a field like pop music where there are no historical constraints—they become interested, like their colleagues who design cars or household appliances, in developing prototypes which they then transform, often in quite minimal ways, in order to find new markets or unexploited outlets. Compared with those highly prosperous economic circuits, those of so-called serious music are obviously impoverished, their hopes of profit are decidedly slender and any interest in improving them is very limited. Thus two factors combine to paralyze the material evolution of the contemporary musical world, causing it to stagnate within territory conquered and explored by other musical periods for their own and not necessarily our needs—the minimal extension of contemporary resources is thus restricted to details. Our civilization sees itself too smugly in the mirror of history; it is no longer creating the needs which would make renewal an economic necessity.

In another sector of musical life which has little or no communication with the "historical" sect, the musical material itself has led a life of its own for the past thirty years or so, more or less independent from invention: out of revenge for its neglect and stagnation, it has formed itself into a surplus, and one wonders at times how it can be utilized. Its urgency expresses itself even before it is integrated into a theme, or into a true musical invention. The fact is that these technological researches have often been carried out by the scientifically minded, who are admittedly interested in music but who stand outside the conventional circuit of musical education and culture. There is a very obvious conjunction here between the economic processes of a society which perpetually demands that the technology depending on it should evolve, and which devotes itself notoriously to the aims of storage and conservation, and the fall-out from that technology, which is capable of being used for sometimes surprising ends, very different and remote from the original research. The economic processes have been set to produce their maximum yield where the reproduction of existing music, accepted as part of our famous cultural heritage is concerned; they have reduced the tendency to monopoly and the rigid supremacy of this heritage by a more and more refined and accessible technology.

Techniques of recording, backing, transmission, reproduction—microphones, loudspeakers, amplifying equipment, magnetic tape—have been developed to the point where they have betrayed their primary objective, which was faithful reproduction. More and more the so-called techniques of reproduction are acquiring an irrepressible tendency to become autonomous and to impress their own image of existing music, and less and less concerned to reproduce as faithfully as possible the conditions of direct audition; it is easy to justify the refusal to be faithful to an unrecorded reality by arguing that *trompe-l'oeil* reproduction, as it were, has little meaning given that the conditions of listening and its objectives are of a different order, that consequently they demand different criteria of perception. This, transposed into musical terms, is the familiar controversy about books and films on art: why give a false notion of a painting in relation to the original by paying exaggerated attention to detail, by controlling the lighting in an unusual way, or by introducing movement into a static world? . . . Whatever we make of this powerful tendency towards technological autonomy in the world of sound reproduction, and whatever its motives or its justifications, one sees how rapidly the resources involved are changing, subject as they are to an inexorable law of movement and evolution under the ceaseless pressure of the market.

Aware of these forms of progress and investigation, and faced at the same time by stagnation in the world of musical instruments, the adventurous musical spirits have thought of turning the situation to their own advantage. Through an intuition that is both sure and unsure—sure of its direction, but unsure of its outcome—they have assumed that modern technology might be used in the search for a new instrumentation. The direction and significance of this exploration did not emerge until long after the need for it arose: irrational necessity preceded aesthetic reflection, the latter even being thought superfluous and likely to hamper any free development. The methods adopted were the outcome either of a genuine change of function, or of an adaptation, or of a distortion of function. Oscillators, amplifiers, and computers, were not invented in order to create music; however, and particularly in the case of the computer, their functions are so easily generalized, so eminently transformable, that there has been a wish to devise different objectives from the direct one: accidental conjunction will create a mutation. The new sound material has come upon unsuspected possibilities, by no means purely by chance but at least by guided extrapolation, and has tended to proliferate on its own: so rich in possibilities is it that sometimes mental categories have yet to be created in order to use them. To musicians accustomed to a precise demarcation, to a controlled hierarchy and to the codes of a convention consolidated over the centuries, the new material has proposed a mass of unclassified solutions, and offered us every kind of structure without any perspective, so affording us a glimpse of its immense potential without guidance as to which methods we should follow.

So we stand at the crossroads of two somewhat divergent paths: on the one hand, a conservative historicism which, if it does not altogether block invention, clearly diminishes it by providing none of the new material it needs for expression, or indeed for regeneration; instead, it creates bottlenecks, and impedes the circuit running from composer to interpreter, or, more generally, that from idea to material, from function to function; on the other hand, a practical impossibility, for all practical purposes, it divides like a reciprocal action of these two poles of creation. On the other hand, we have a progressive technology whose force of expression and development are sidetracked into a proliferation of material means which may or may not be in accord with genuine musical thought—for this tends by nature to be independent, to the detriment of the overall cohesion of the sound world. (Having said which, one should note that long before contemporary technology, the history of musical instruments was littered with corpses: superfluous or over-complicated inventions, incapable of being integrated into the context demanded by the musical ideas of the age which produced them; because there was no balance between originator and necessity they fell into disuse.)

Thus inventors, engineers and technicians may come in search of new processes according to their personal preferences, choosing one or that purely by whim, and fortuitous rather than for musically determined reasons—unless the reasons stemmed from their exclusively scientific preoccupations. But musicians, on the whole, be felt repelled by the technical and the scientific, their education and culture having in no way given them the agility or even the readiness to tackle problems of this kind. Their most immediate and primary reaction, therefore, is to choose from the samples available or to make do at a level easily accessible to manipulation, lacking the courage or the means directly to confront the more arduous problems, often lacking an easy solution, posed by contemporary technology and its rapid development. Rather than ask themselves the double question, both functional and fundamental, whether the material is adequate to the idea and the idea compatible with the material, they give way to the dangerous temptation of a superficial, simple question: does the material satisfy my immediate needs? Such a hasty choice, detached from all but the most superficial functions, certainly cannot lead far; it excludes all genuine dialectic and discovery, it divorces itself from the material that intellectual schemas can exist without the support of sound. This does not apply to the music of the past which was not, properly speaking, written for specified instruments, for its writing assumes absolutely the notion of the instrument, even of the monodic instrument within a fixed and limited register. If invention is uninterested in the essential function of the musical material, if it restricts itself to criteria of temporary interest, it inevitably ceases to be a particular sense not a real but a virtual one. He will know what is possible with an instrument, what it would be absurd to demand of it, what is simple and what is our of the question, its lightness or its heaviness, its ease of articulation or difficulty in sound production in various registers, the quality of the timbre, all the modifications that can be made either through technique itself or with the aid of such devices as the mute, the weight of each instrument, its relationship with the others; all these are things that he will verify in practice, his imagination abandoning itself to the delights of extrapolation. The gift lies in the grafting of intuition on to the data he has acquired. A virtual knowledge of the entire instrumental field will enable him to integrate into his musical invention, even before he actually composes, its vast hidden resources; that knowledge forms a part of his invention.

Thus a virtual understanding of contemporary technology ought to form part of the musician's invention; otherwise, scientists, technicians and musicians will rub shoulders and cannot help one another, but their activities will be only marginal one to the other. Our grand design today, therefore, is to prepare the way for their integration and, through an increasingly pertinent dialogue, to reach a common language which would take account of the imperatives of musical invention and the priorities of technology. This dialogue will be based as much on the sound material as on concepts.

Where the material is concerned, such a dialogue seems possible here and now: it offers an immediate interest and is far from presenting any insurmountable difficulties. From our education within a traditional culture we have, restricted and experienced how instrumental models function and what they are capable of. But in the field of electronics and computers—the instrument which would be directly involved—models do not exist, or only sporadically, and largely thanks to our imagination. Lacking sound schemes to follow, the new field seems exaggeratedly vast, chaotic, and if not inorganic at least unorganized. The quite natural temptation is to approach this new field with our tried and tested methods and to apply the grid of familiar categories to an unexplored domain—categories which would seem to make the task easier and to which, for that reason, we would like to resort unthinkingly. The existing categories could, it is true, be helpful at first in mapping out virgin territory and enabling us, by reconstitution and synthesis, better to know the natural world which we think we know so well and which, the nearer we get to it, seems to elude the precision of our investigation. It is not only the question 'what is a sound made of?' that we have to answer) but the much harder one of "how do we perceive this sound in relation to its constituent elements?" So by juxtaposing what is known with what is not known, and what is possible with what will be possible, we shall establish a geography of the sound universe, so establishing the continuity of continents where up until now many unknown territories have been discerned.

It goes without saying that the resonance extension of the material will inspire new modes of thought; between thought and material a very complex game of mirrors is set up, by which images are relayed continuously from one to the other. A forceful, demanding idea tends to create its own material, and in the same way new material inevitably involves a recasting of the idea. We might compare this with architecture, where structural limitations have been radically changed by the use of new materials such as concrete, glass, and steel. Stylistic change did not happen overnight; there were frequent hesitations and references back to the past—to ensoble, as it were, these architectural upstarts. New possibilities triumphed over imitation and transformed architectural invention and concepts from top to bottom. These concepts had to rely much more than before on technology, with technical calculations intervening even in aesthetic choices, and engineers and architects were obliged to find a common language—which we are now trying to set out to look for in the world of music.

If the choice of material proves to be the chief determinant in the development of creative ideas, this is not to say that ideas should be left to proceed on their own, nor that a change of material will automatically entail a revision of concepts relating to musical invention. Undoubtedly, as in the case of architecture, there will be caprices and hesitations, and an irrepressible desire to apply old concepts to the new material, in order to achieve—perhaps *ab absurdo*?—a kind of verification. But if we wish to pass beyond these immediate temptations, we shall have to strive to think in new categories; to change not only the methods but the very aim of creation. It is surprising that in the musical developments of the past sixty years many stylistic attitudes have been negative, their chief aim, need or necessity being to avoid referring back—if there has been such reference it has been produced in a raw unassimilated state, like a collage or parody, or even a mockery. In trying to destroy or amalgamate, reference in fact betrays the inability to absorb, it betrays the weakness of a stylistic conception unable to "phagocytose" what it takes hold of. But if one insists on stylistic integrity as a prime criterion, and if the material, through previous use, is rich in connotations, if it stimulates involuntary associations and risks diverting expression into unwanted directions, one is led in practice into playing, if not absolutely against the material, then at least to the limit of its possibilities. Coincidence no longer exists, or can only exist in the choice of a specialized area—in the rejection, that is, of many other areas which would impose references that were eccentric and too powerful. It would seem that this excessively cautious attitude could not persist in the face of new material from which connotations have been excluded; the relationship between idea and material becomes eminently positive and stylistic integrity is no longer at risk.

Creative thought, consequently, is in a position to examine its own way of working, its own mechanisms. Whether in the evolution of formal structures, in the utilization of determinism, or in the manipulation of chance, and whether the plan of assembly be based on cohesion or fragmentariness, the field is vast and open to invention. At its limits, one can imagine possible works where material and idea are brought to coincide by the final, instantaneous operation that gives them a true, provisional existence—that operation being the activity of the composer, of an interpreter, or of the audience itself. Certainly, the finite categories within which we are still accustomed to evolve will offer less interest when this dizzying prospect opens up: of a stored-up potential creating instant originality.

Before we reach that point, the effort will either be collective or it will not be at all. No individual, however gifted, could produce a solution to all the problems posed by the present evolution of musical expression.

Research/invention, individual/collective, the multiple resources of this double dialectic are capable of engendering infinite possibilities. This invention is marked more particularly by the imprint of an individual, goes without saying; we must still prevent this involving us in humdrum, particular solutions which somewhat remain the composer's personal property. What is absolutely necessary is that we should move towards global, generalizable solutions. In material as in method, a constant flow must be established between modes of thought and types of action, a continual exchange between giving and receiving. Future experiments, in all probability, will be set up in accordance with this permanent dialogue. Will there be many of us to undertake it?

This is the English version of an essay published in *Passage du XXe siècle, 1re partie, janvier/juillet 1977*, published by IRCAM, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.

The patois hunters

By D. McMillan

GASTON TUAILLON:
Comportements de recherche en dialectologie française
Paris: Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique.

The massive developments and innovations in the field of linguistics over the past half-century may have left the impression that linguistic geography and dialectology, in which French and French-based scholars, headed by J. Gilliéron, had played such a notable part, was a vein of research that had been worked out. Not so. Even before the last war, one of Gilliéron's pupils, Albert Dauzat, had perceived the need for a completely new atlas to complement the *Atlas linguistique de la France* of Gilliéron and Edmont, or more specifically a series of regional atlases. Before his project had got under way, J. Haust in Belgium had begun his *Atlas linguistique de la Wallonie*, and F. Gardette in his native Forez, his *Atlas linguistique et ethnographique du Lyonnais*. After Dauzat's death in 1955, the task was entrusted to a number of regional directors, and work has proceeded of necessity slowly ever since, with, in many cases, a new generation of scholars taking over.

With the position reached in which several atlases are now published in their entirety, with the others merely in process of publication, and all fieldwork largely completed, the scholars who have borne the brunt of these labours are now able to step back and devote themselves to reflection on the issues and problems arising. Gaston Tuaillon, himself editor of a regional atlas (that of the Jura and Northern Alps), successor of the late P. Gardette as chairman of the board directing the *Atlas linguistiques de la France par régions*, and author of a number of notable and original studies, has had the happy idea, in this modest and scholarly volume, of presenting a critical inventory of the achievements in this field.

To seek out individual scholars in this brief note would be invidious; suffice it to say that recent researches have not only shed new light on old problems, but have gone far to open up new horizons. If a statement of underlying principle were required, illuminating the fundamental difference between the methods of the dialectologist and those characterizing some of the more widely publicised aspects of theoretical linguistics, it might be found in Tuaillon's own conclusion to his contribution to *Les Dialectes de France*:

> Il faudrait . . . une méthode écrite par un anti-Descartes dont le premier principe serait qu'on pût recevoir une chose vraie sans qu'on la connût évidemment être telle, parce que toute science n'est pas nécessairement certaine et évidente et que celui qui doute de beaucoup de choses n'est pas moins savant que celui qui n'y a jamais songé.

Field in which French scholars (followed only by their Romanian colleagues) have very much come into their own.

Rome's rotunda

By J. B. Ward-Perkins

WILLIAM L. MACDONALD :
The Pantheon
Design, Meaning, and Progeny
160pp, with 154 illustrations. Allen Lane. £10.

"Future investigations may possibly show that Roman architecture was not as dull as it now appears. I fear, however, that this is unlikely": the writer, Arthur Kingsley Porter, one of the outstanding architectural historians of his day; the date, 1919. To Kingsley Porter and to most other scholars of his generation, living in the afterglow of an age to which Greece represented the only possible model of classical artistic perfection, Hadrian's Pantheon was just another large circular building. It was a severe case of self-induced myopia. Even Urban VIII, who stripped the porch of its bronze to make eighty cannon for Castel Sant' Angelo (thereby provoking the famous pasquinade: "quod non fecerunt barbari fecerunt Barberini"—shockingly misquoted on page 19), felt moved to describe it as the most celebrated building in the whole world. Michelangelo ("di segno angelico e non umano"), Bramante, Serlio ("the Pantheon seems to me to be the most perfect piece of work I ever saw"), Palladio and Bernini had all felt very differently, and we today must be grateful that fashion once again permits us to share their vision. The first glimpse of the interior, as one steps from the porch and through the great bronze doors, with the vast patterned dome soaring effortlessly above, is an experience that never seems to lose its magic.

It is typical of the great monuments of classical Rome that there is no standard monograph on the Pantheon; indeed it is hard to see how such a monograph can be written until the building has been accurately and fully surveyed in accordance with modern standards. Meanwhile we have Kjeld De Fine Licht's *The Rotunda in Rome* (Copenhagen, 1968), which provides an admirably thorough account of what can be known without such a survey, together with a critical summary of the very large literature that has grown up around it; and now William L. MacDonald, who included a preliminary study of it in the first volume of his *Architecture of the Roman Empire* (New Haven, 1965), has come back with a concise, well illustrated general account of the building, its history and its meaning.

A short historical introduction is followed by chapters on the structure, on the architectural background and principles of design, and on the meaning of the design. A concluding chapter deals with its influence upon subsequent architectural history, from late Antiquity to Piacentini. Here Professor MacDonald makes the interesting point that it has always been the idea of the building rather than the actual building itself which has been copied. There exists an exact replica of the Parthenon at Nashville, Tennessee, but the Pantheon has never been precisely duplicated at any scale. The innumerable Pantheon-like buildings, from Bordeaux to Charlottesville, are all in varying degrees free interpretations of the original design, adapted to the styles currently prevailing. Apart from the imperial mausoleum of the third and fourth centuries AD, its direct impact on the architectural imagination of Antiquity seems to have been surprisingly limited. Except for casual topographical references it is mentioned only twice in ancient literature, by Cassius Dio and by Ammianus Marcellinus. The Middle Ages only ranked it under the *mirabilia*, but it was really left to the architects of the Renaissance to rediscover this miraculously preserved relic of the classical past.

The least satisfactory chapter is that in which Professor MacDonald attempts to explain the meaning of the design. That there was an element of conscious symbolism behind the choice of the rotunda can hardly be doubted, and every classical analogy suggests that it was in some sense a cosmic symbolism. It is a reasonable guess (but no more) that the apse and the six niches of the interior contained statues of the seven old planetary gods; and the circular opening in the crown of the dome could hardly have escaped interpretation as a link with the celestial domain of which the dome was an earthly replica. But the finer points of symbolism so often lie in the eye and mind of the beholder, and they can so easily change from one generation to the next. One has to be on very sure ground to say what a building really meant to its builder or his contemporaries, and in the case of the Pantheon the honest answer is that we lack evidence.

It is significant that Cassius Dio, writing barely a century later, is careful to qualify his explanation of the name, 'Pantheon', as an expression of his own personal opinion. Shelley and Marguerite Yourcenar (who are quoted, Madame de Staël, Byron, Cardinal Wiseman and Arthur Hugh Clough (who are not) tell us much about nineteenth and twentieth-century imaginative attitudes, but nothing whatever about what was in Hadrian's mind. "The Pantheon rotunda is a metaphor in architecture for the ecumenical pretensions of the Roman Empire, the girdling cornices a statement in architectural form of the nine-thousand-mile boundary that surrounded the later Greco-Roman world." There is a certain type of architectural criticism where such rhetoric is in place and may even have a meaning. In a work even of popularizing scholarship it rings a discordant note.

The book is pleasantly and thoughtfully produced and the documentation is ample without being obtrusive. It fills a gap.

Early days for the drachma

By R. A. G. Carson

COLIN M. KRAAY :
Archaic and Classical Greek Coins
390pp and 64 plates. Methuen. £30.

It is now close on a century since Methuen published as part of the series, Handbooks of Archaeology, several volumes on various series of coinage. These have for long been regarded as standard works, but new material, research, and the application of new techniques in the past decades have outmoded many of the concepts and details, so that the appearance of a new series of which the present volume is the first is both necessary and welcome. It is appropriate that the first of the new series should deal with the earliest coinage of Western civilization, and it is indicative of the greatly increased volume of knowledge and material that, unlike the first edition, which dealt with the whole range of Greek coinage down to the end of the Hellenistic kingdoms, the new series proposes to devote two volumes to this coinage, with the present volume stopping short of the advent of Alexander the Great. It is appropriate, also, that this volume is contributed by Colin M. Kraay, for much of the new information and the new thinking is owed to his work and research.

Archaic and Classical Greek Coins is designed to be an authoritative and up-to-date account of the state of knowledge both for the expert and also for those with some reasonable familiarity with the series, and the most abiding impression is of the amount of solid information that is now almost every line; but at the same time the author has been remarkably successful in producing an eminently readable text which should hold the attention of those with little prior knowledge of the subject. This has been achieved in great part by resisting the scholar's temptation to justify every statement, so that there is no great proliferation of footnotes to distract the reader. However, the essential and important references are given for those who wish to pursue the details and arguments of a particular point, and a bibliography, selected with critical acumen, directs the enquirer to the fuller discussions.

A certain unity can be imparted to the account of most major coinage series by developing the discussion along chronological lines, but this is possible only to a limited extent in the case of the first centuries of Greek coinage; for coinage began in different forms and at different times, and developed in different ways in various parts of the Greek world. Dr Kraay's compromise solution is to discuss the material primarily on a geographical basis in a sequence which is to some extent chronological, though naturally there is considerable overlap.

The views adopted on a number of key questions may be somewhat surprising to those with little means of keeping up with recent discussion and controversy. On the matter of the date of the beginning of coinage the author maintains the view, widely accepted for some time now, that a date in the mid-sixth century BC accords best with archaeological and other evidence, and there is only the merest hint of quite a vocal claim that the pendulum-swing in favour of this latish date has been excessive. In the discussion of one of the best known of Greek coinages, the fifth century "owl" tetradrachms of Athens, it is persuasively argued that the massive issues are of the second half of the century and not between 480 and 450, and that the famous decadrachms cannot be a "Victory coinage" in 479 but have to be moved down to the 460s. In the Syracusan series, also, the Demaratean decadrachm is dislodged from its long association with the victory over the Carthaginians at Himera in 480 and placed in the late 460s.

Not every series exhibits such striking modifications resulting from modern research, but every series reflects the consequences of new discoveries of material and research, and receives a somewhat more ample treatment than in the earlier volume. The book is generously illustrated by sixty-four plates of coins, reproduced from plaster casts, with a consequent uniformity and clarity. This form of illustration is probably unsurpassed as a faithful means of conveying information, but it is at the expense of immediacy of impact. The high quality of artistry exhibited by much of the Greek coinage is the aspect which distinguishes it as superior to almost every coinage since, and it is precisely this quality that the present plates fail to convey.

The Archaeologists' Year Book 1977 (312pp. Poole: Dolphin, £6) has been revised and updated and aims to provide, on an international basis, essential facts on organizations active in archaeology (including industrial), anthropology, etc nology and folk-life studies. The contents include a world directory of archaeological and kindred societies; universities with archaeological and anthropological departments together with a list of staff; government archaeological agencies; international research groups; councils committees and trusts; museums with archaeological and ethnographical collections of specialist collections and staff; grant making institutions; and a miscellaneous list of useful addresses. The index of individual names serves as a brief "Who's Who" at code numbers enable entries to be traced back to the sections in which they appear.

Learning from the Greeks

By Michael Crawford

ALAN WARDMAN :
Rome's Debt to Greece
200pp. Elek. £5.50.

P. Scipio Africanus, the conqueror of Carthage, and his brother wrote in 190 BC during their campaign in Asia to the city of Heraclea, assuring their benevolence to all Greeks and undertaking to look after the city; in so acting they stood near the beginning of a process which for the first and last time united the Mediterranean under a single ruling power and created a remarkably homogeneous Greco-Roman governing class to administer it. Alan Wardman provides an analysis of the Roman debt to Greece in the field of high culture (partly because of the nature of the evidence neither he nor I in this review deal with developments in the field of popular culture); the style is rather flat and sometimes odd, as when one finds Socrates "doing philosophy". Mr Wardman also shows a dangerous tendency to generalize from a single example, without the surness of touch of Arnaldo Momigliano.

Rome's Debt to Greece begins with a section on Roman attitudes to the Greek world, including an unsuccessful attempt to argue from the conduct of provincial governors to their attitudes to Greek culture; in discussing philhellenism in the second chapter Mr Wardman regards Sulla as hostile to Greek culture, and Lucullus as philhellene because Ephesus established a festival in his honour, but the Greek world is littered with inscriptions honouring Sulla and three festivals in his honour are also attested. Elsewhere Mr Wardman is ill at ease with historical evidence, blandly accepting the authenticity of, as supposed Roman letter to Seleucus II of Syria and of the account in Livy of a speech delivered in 200 BC.

The core of the book consists of four chapters dealing with poetry, historiography, rhetoric and philosophy; but it is odd that a book called *Rome's Debt to Greece* should contain nothing on, for instance, Roman art, despite the interaction between art and oratory over such problems as eclecticism and personality. More serious, however, is the failure to consider Greek intellectual activity in the last two centuries BC. Rome was, unlike Athens, flowing to the Renaissance (a parallel which Mr Wardman explores), but Athens was a living, not a largely static heritage, and learning from a still living culture and one on which Roman interest and patronage had a considerable effect. The account of what Homer meant to the Greek world is hardly satisfactory; in considering historiography, Mr Wardman castigates the Romans for failings also characteristic of contemporary Greek historians; rhetors in the Greek world are barely mentioned; the great historian and philosopher Posidonius appears only briefly and incidentally; the discussion of the attitude of Seneca to leisure completely underrates the Greek philosophical background.

Mr Wardman argues that Rome was conscious of her military superiority over Greece and felt it necessary to outdo her in intellectual matters also. This is inadequate as an explanation of the phenomena he discusses. The Elder Cato, on whom Mr Wardman leans heavily, was a highly untypical figure, and was recognized as such both by his contemporaries and by later Romans; and the conscious attempt by Cicero to create a philosophical literature in Latin stemmed from the realization that he had surpassed Demosthenes as an orator and from the enforced idleness of much of the latter period of his life. To base an explanatory model for Roman relationships with Greece in the field of high culture on these two men is very dangerous; self-assertiveness as a characteristic feature of Latin culture surely belongs to the generation after Cicero and later. If one surveys the whole process down to Cicero, the dominant impression is of a well-nigh borrowing of Greek artistic and intellectual skills and techniques, slowly and unstoppably leading to the emergence of a developed Latin culture. There is, of course, nothing paradoxical in the notion of a process of acculturation being associated with a process of growing self-awareness, nor any need for the simple assumption that Rome developed her culture in opposition to Greek culture.

It is no doubt true that Roman attitudes to Greek culture were highly ambivalent throughout and far from limited to simple admiration; there was a clear tendency to make claims for Rome which would counterbalance the Greek achievement, and the Roman claim that its sagas were as good as philosophers (of whom Rome had none before Cicero) is a nice example of this tendency. But none of this explains why Rome borrowed with Greek culture in the first place (or indeed why Greek rather than, say, Carthaginian culture, which along with the Egyptian cultures was effectively assassinated by Rome. The failure to consider this question is the most serious weakness of Mr Wardman's book, together with his adoption of a static treatment by themes, rather than a chronological treatment of the whole field. This would also have revealed significant variations in the pattern and pace of hellenization, the result in no considerable extent of the rule played by the interests of the oligarchy; Rome during the republic did not take over everything or all at once. The writing of history developed in part in response to the needs of a competitive aristocracy; and there is no call for surprise at the selectivity of the Roman approach to Greek philosophy.

Certain basic affinities between Rome and Greece must be taken for granted; likewise the Roman readiness to innovate noticed by Polybius. One can then go on to point out that just as the Roman oligarchy had always been relatively rich, so it had always been in a certain extent exposed to Greek culture and in a position (to put it crudely) to perceive what Greek culture had and what Roman culture did not have; the conquest of the Greek East from 200 BC onwards provided ready access to Greek artistic and intellectual skills and techniques and to wealth on a staggering scale. In trying to understand the hellenization of Rome one must not forget the interests of the oligarchy and the nature of peer-group competition; just as when one member of the oligarchy had acquired wealth the rest had no serious alternative but to follow suit or lose face by comparison and run the risk of losing status, so the process of hellenization involved in part examples, once set, being followed by other members of the group. Ineffective attempts were made to check cultural (and religious) innovation and to check conspicuous displays of wealth; it is no accident that in the second century BC the Elder Cato stood out both against the rising prosperity of Rome which threatened to destroy the ideology of collective rule by the group, and against many facets of hellenization (though he was incapable of remaining wholly unaffected by either process); not is it an accident that the central period of hellenization of the Roman oligarchy was precisely the period when it was locked in escalating internal competition which finally destroyed the system, and that a reaction in favour of Latin culture accompanied the principate of Augustus.

The hellenization of Rome is also relevant to developments in the Greek world and in part to

Rulers of the waves

By Bryan Ranft

CLARK G. REYNOLDS :
Command of the Sea
The History and Strategy of Maritime Empires
642pp. Hale. £6.50.

Command of the Sea is an English edition of Clark G. Reynolds's long and ambitious history of sea power first published in the United States in 1974. Its aim is ambitious in the sense that it aspires to nothing less than a detailed account of the significance of sea power from the twentieth century BC to the present day, leading into an identification of strategic principles and political patterns which have linked ability to command the sea with the rise and fall of civilizations and empires. This account is based on a consideration of all the constituents of sea power: geographical, political and economic, as well as the more obvious factors of developments in naval technology and tactics. Technology is rightly identified as being of particular significance in determining the efficacy of the naval contribution to warfare.

A first reaction that all this has been done before by A. T. Mahan and his disciples should be corrected. Not only was the comparative neglect of the impact of technology the weakest point of Mahan's analysis, as it was in the work of Julian Corbett, whom Professor Reynolds frequently and correctly praises for his otherwise comprehensive grasp of the strengths and limitations of maritime strategy, but technical change continues unabated. If these two outstanding older exponents of sea power left room for expansion of their analysis, none of their more recent successors have produced work of comparable quality embracing technological developments since 1945. Paul Kennedy's *The Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery*, which has appeared since Professor Reynolds's book was originally published, does indeed approach what is required, but its coverage is largely limited to England. One of the outstanding features of Reynolds's work is that it considers virtually every state in whose history maritime power has played a significant part.

His attempt therefore to present "a meaningful overview of naval history" is well worth making. Starting from the maritime exploits of primitive man he moves through the rise and fall of Mediterranean civilizations which culminated in "Pax Romana". A briefer examination of the significance of the sea in the Middle Ages leads to the more familiar waters of the maritime rivalries of Spain, Holland, Britain, France and Germany which culminated in "Pax Britannica". This in turn is shown to have been eroded by the challenge of other industrial and naval powers and finally destroyed by the two world wars. Today we are left with "Pax Americana", which in Professor Reynolds's view, will prevail over any possible future challenge from the Soviet Union, as long as it is based on superior maritime strength. This conclusion is based on the principles which he has deduced from his long historical analysis. There have been two types of empire in history, the maritime and the continental. The former, here termed "thalassocracies", have been more successful in exercising widespread power because they have reaped the strategic, political and economic advantages of command of the sea. Continental powers which have tried to rival them have found it impossible to be equally strong on land and sea and Soviet Russia, despite the current increase in her maritime strength, will fall into this pattern.

This final prophecy, which Professor Reynolds sees as the climax of his book, can be challenged. There has not been in history a state with such effective total control over its people and economy as the Soviet Union and it could well succeed in an attempt to counter the United States at sea. This is the more likely because contemporary trends in naval technology are working to the advantage of those who seek to deny their rivals the ability to use the sea rather than of those who seek to command it in the classical way. This factor has already made it impossible for the United States to use her maritime strength to further her international influence as effectively as she did before the recent rise in Russia's naval strength. Moreover in today's political circumstances there are other ways in which a continental power can spread its influence, as recent events in southern Africa have shown.

Such judgments are subjective and Professor Reynolds may well prove to be right. The main weakness of his book is quite different and ironically, springs from the exceptional range of his knowledge and his determination to impart it. Not only is his book long but it is so packed with detail as to make it a burden to read.

Instead of limiting himself to a full account of the evolution of navies, which he is so eminently qualified to do, and grafting it on to a closely argued analysis of its impact on warfare and hence on the fate of nations, he has spread his attention far too widely. Large portions of the book are chronicles of political and diplomatic events, such as the potted accounts of the complexities of European international politics of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which are unnecessary for fellow historians and which students will find in much fuller form in the numerous books dealing with particular periods. His highly compressed accounts of the major wars are open to similar criticism and the mental indigestion of the reader is further intensified by the inclusion of catalogues of cultural achievement which in some ill-defined way are seen as connected with maritime developments.

Cheering up the fleet

By Elizabeth North

RICHARD BAKER :
Dry Ginger
The Biography of Admiral of the Fleet Sir Michael Le Fanu
254pp. W. H. Allen. £5.

When Admiral Sir Michael Le Fanu became First Sea Lord in 1968, it was to supervise a much diminished navy. Service morale was low, and one of his duties, as he saw it, was to cheer people up. He was good at this; he also had enough leadership to go with his popularity to be able to withdraw the time-honoured daily rum issue. It was this and his red hair which has caused him to be remembered as "Dry Ginger".

From early in Le Fanu's career wardroom chat was that he would end up as First Sea Lord; it seems their Lordships agreed with this prediction and they nurtured him with every possible naval experience. Richard Baker's biography gives a fascinating picture of the actual things a naval officer does. A naval officer, it seems, is given a job, allowed time to adjust, to take command, reorganize whatever ship or shore establishment or office in the Admiralty; and then sent somewhere else. The faster this happens, the faster you get promoted. The pattern jerks; you are in Londonderry, in Aden or in the Far East; in between you are at the Admiralty wearing pin-stripe suits. And at the end of each brief settlement you are reported on. Le Fanu never had a less than brilliant report. There is a form called S206 on which your qualities are graded. Usually Le Fanu got "nines" on every count—rather like a champion skater getting top points from all the judges.

Le Fanu's wife, disabled by polio, went too. His handling of her chair, her crutches, was accomplished. "Lady Lef's sticks" went everywhere, and where they could not go, he carried her.

There is a brand of laconic humour apparently exclusive to the navy, and Richard Baker, although himself a Royal Naval Reservist Officer, does not explain this elegant tradition. Ships' companies used to publish voyage anthologies: gems from the wardroom, commission in-jokes, limericks—can they still afford it? Le Fanu was a recent and a skilful exponent of the naval funny rhyme. He loved to parody—anything from "Riding Down to Bangor" to *Omar Khayyam*. The verses were occasional, turned out fast, sometimes performed to musical accompaniment; but there is evidence of working over, of the scratching of the head for rhymes, the pacing of the deck in duffle coat at night, then back to the naval signal pad. He was a dab hand at the witty signal; when in command of the carrier Eagle, and with an ailing crew, he sent: "Anything you can fly, we can fly better."

The navy, even in its present dwindled state, still needs to show the flag; it still needs the lively humorist to keep the party going. Le Fanu's gift of being funny was not only there on paper; he was outstandingly charming with a touch which was inimitable. Serving as liaison officer with the Americans in 1945, he charmed them and wrote rhymes for them and they gave him the United States Bronze Star. So much did this particular job depend on the Le Fanu warmth and talent to amuse that his successor, when appointed, could not find a thing to do; the post was cancelled.

Dry Ginger is a carefully documented book about the fast promotion of a good and funny man who had his darker moments. These were stabs of impatience at Whitehall strategies and reflections on what it meant to be a fighting man. He saw the flattened Tokyo in 1945 and wrote home:

> I cannot believe it is morally right to be no more than a hired assassin . . . on the other hand, as a Commander or better, one exerts quite an influence on the men under one, an influence I would exert were I to manage a pub, take holy orders or do welfare work in a slum.

Twenty-three years later a card on his desk in Whitehall read: "There they go and I must hurry to catch up with them, for I am their leader." It is sad to know that Michael Le Fanu died in 1970 from leukaemia at the age of fifty-seven. Had he lived he would have taken over at that time as Chief of Defence Staff, the highest position any service officer can reach. Whoever it was who said that high spirits should not be mistaken for a lack of seriousness might have been speaking of him.

The mid-day rum ration was withdrawn in 1969 because it was seen as inappropriate in the more scientific navy of the time; wrong buttons might be pushed in afternoons. But, however much the scene has changed, the navy—or any organization employing men and women in their thousands—needs people like Le Fanu.

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(minimum for Chartered Librarian £3519)

We need a Children's Librarian for Wealdstone Library, but the sort of person we are seeking should eventually be thinking of further promotion, not necessarily concerned with young people's work.

For this post a good knowledge of children's literature is required and candidates (of either sex) must have passed their final examinations including the Library Service to Young People Paper.

Application form and further details from the Assistant Controller (Manpower Services), quoting reference TLS/E67, London Borough of Harrow, PO Box 57, Civic Centre, Harrow HA1 2XF, returnable within 14 days.

Twenty-four-hour Ansafone service, 01-863 8270.

Harrow Libraries

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY LIBRARY

Applications are invited for the following vacancies:—

LIBRARIAN

Harrogate Team, based in Harrogate

Applicants should have completed Parts I and II of the Library Association Examinations or the Postgraduate/Degree Course in Librarianship. Salary on Librarian Scale: £2,127 to £3,282 per annum, plus £312 per annum salary supplement. Starting point for Chartered Librarians £2,922 per annum plus £312 per annum salary supplement.

TRAINEE LIBRARIANS

(three posts)

Based at Northallerton (County Headquarters) and York

Applicants should have completed Parts I and II of the Library Association Examinations or the Postgraduate/Degree Course in Librarianship. Successful candidates will undertake a variety of practical work experience as part of their training programme.

Salary on Trainee Grade: £2,127 to £2,653 per annum (bar at £2,529 per annum) plus £312 per annum salary supplement. Starting point for possession of the above qualifications £2,277 per annum plus £312 per annum salary supplement.

Removal expenses and lodging allowances may be payable in approved cases.

Application forms and further particulars for the above posts are obtainable from the County Librarian, North Yorkshire County Library, 21 Grammar School Lane, Northallerton, North Yorkshire DL6 1DF, or telephone Northallerton 5881. Closing date: May 21, 1977.

Medical Librarian

(Oman)

Ministry of Health, Muscat

Chartered Librarian with several years' experience in a medical or scientific library or information service.

Salary: £6085 pa local tax free.

Benefits: Free furnished accommodation: £114 monthly allowance for car, electricity and water. 60 days' passage-paid home leave on renewal of contract. One year renewable contract.

Return fares are paid. Local contracts are guaranteed by the British Council.

Please write, briefly stating qualifications and length of appropriate service quoting reference number 77 AO 43 and title of post for further information and application form to The British Council (Appointments), 65 Davies Street, London, W1Y 2AA.

THE BRITISH COUNCIL

LIBRARY ASSISTANT

rising to £2814 pa + £312 pa supplement

A varied job in the library at our Hendon location in north-west London.

You would be involved with counter work, lending, discharging, reshelving, filing, reserving and recalling books, and answering enquiries whenever possible.

An O level standard of education is expected, and you preferably should possess relevant experience in a local authority or college library. You must have a flexible approach to work, be accurate and able to communicate easily with staff and students.

Please write stating age, address and telephone number, exact details of present post and relevant experience, qualifications and interests. It will not be possible to acknowledge all applications, but selected applicants will be invited for interview. We will then send further information about the job and the Polytechnic.

Middlesex Polytechnic, Bounds Green Road, London N11 2NQ, to arrive no later than May 25.

Middlesex Polytechnic

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE GALWAY

JUNIOR LECTURESHIP IN EDUCATION

JUNIOR LECTURESHIP IN SPANISH

Applications are invited for the above full-time posts. Salary scale £3,800-£6,478 plus marriage and family allowances.

Closing date for the receipt of applications 27 May, 1977.

Further information may be obtained from the Registrar.

Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität, Frankfurt/M

The following post has become vacant at the University of Frankfurt:

Dept. of Modern Philology (English)

Position of

PROFESSOR OF LINGUISTICS

(Salary scale: H4=min. DM40,000.-)

The successful candidate will be responsible for expanding the linguistic programme for students going into the teaching profession, programmes which will include the theoretical foundations of linguistics and descriptive problems of English, in addition he should cooperate in the coordination of interdepartmental linguistic study programmes.

The applicant should already have published in three of the following spheres of research: syntax, semantics, word-formation, morphology, text-linguistics, pragmatics, theory of translation.

The candidate will be expected to have a Ph.D. as proof of outstanding academic ability, also to provide evidence of proven teaching ability at university level and wide experience of academic instruction (§ 104 HHG). Conditions of employment are contained in § 39 HHG, available on request.

The successful candidate will be expected to fulfil his obligations both in teaching and research according to § 50 and to participate in the administration of the university.

Applications with curriculum vitae (including details of professional and academic records, photo copy of the Ph.D. record of academic teaching work, and list of publications (in the case of joint publications the candidate should indicate what his contribution consisted of) should be addressed to:

DER PRASIDENT DER UNIVERSITAT,
SENCKENBERGANLAGE 31,
6000 FRANKFURT AM MAIN, BY 25.5.1977.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON INSTITUTE OF ORTHOPAEDICS

Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital

Applications are invited for the post of

LIBRARIAN

Candidates must have an appropriate professional qualification. Some practical experience of medical librarianship would be an advantage. The Institute has promises and Libraries at Great Portland Street, W.1, and Stanmore, Middlesex. The person appointed will be expected to provide efficient Library and Information services at both branches.

Salary on University Scale 1A (£2,904-£5,627) proceeding to Scale 2 (£5,423-£6,655), commencing at a point appropriate to the qualifications and experience of the person selected, plus London Weighting (at present £459 per annum). The University's Superannuation Scheme will apply.

A Job Description may be obtained from the Secretary of the Institute, 234 Great Portland Street, London W1W 6AD, to whom applications should be sent, including the names of two referees, by 31st May, 1977.

West Yorkshire Metropolitan County Council

Department of Administration

ARCHIVES ASSISTANT

POST REF. KV 13 001

AP3 £2,922-£3,282 or AP4 £3,366-£3,702 + £312 supplement

Salary will be according to qualifications and experience.

Applicants should be graduates either with, or now studying for, a diploma in Archive Administration, or equivalent qualification.

Duties will include listing collections and helping senior professional staff over the whole range of the work of the office including some room duties and enquiries, surveys, talks and exhibitions.

Application forms and further details can be obtained from the Director of Manpower Services, Raines House, Denby Dale Road, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF1 1HN, to whom they should be returned not later than 20th May, 1977.

OXFORD POLYTECHNIC

TEMPORARY SENIOR LIBRARY ASSISTANT/ ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

(£2,529 to £3,282, plus supplement)

A post graded Senior Library Assistant or Assistant Librarian will be created for six months from June 1. The duties will include the ordering, acquisition and accessioning of some 3,000 volumes and applicants must have had previous experience in these procedures. Placement will be according to age, experience and qualifications.

Further particulars and application forms may be obtained from the Administrator, Oxford Polytechnic, Oxford OX3 0BP.

CLOSING DATE: MAY 20, 1977.

DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY REGIONAL COUNCIL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LIBRARY SERVICE

ASSISTANT REGIONAL LIBRARIAN

Salary Scale £4,998-£6,415, plus £312 Supplement

Applications are invited from Chartered Librarians with considerable experience of Library Administration for this second-tier post on the Regional Library, Dumfries. The mobile libraries serve a very pleasant rural area of 2,440 square miles.

Applications, giving age, qualifications and names of two referees, should be addressed to ALEX G. [illegible], Regional Librarian, Regional Headquarters, Council Offices, Dumfries DG1 3DD. Closing date: 23rd May, 1977.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Rijksuniversiteit Utrecht

(Netherlands)

University of Utrecht, Faculty of Arts

Chair of Vulgar and Medieval Latin

Applications are invited for the post of (full) professor in Vulgar and Medieval Latin.

Applicants must be able to teach Vulgar and Medieval Latin at all levels to students of Classical Languages, Romanic Languages, History, History of Arts, Musicology and other disciplines who need Vulgar or Medieval Latin as part of their curriculum.

They must also be able to supervise and stimulate research in these fields; up to now the major part of the research of the Utrecht Department of Late Latin has been devoted to Latin texts from the Late Middle Ages. The staff of the Department has been equipped with an assistant professor (Dutch: "lector") of Vulgar Latin, and two staff members.

The salary ranges from DFl 5,931.00 to DFl 9,313.00 (gross) per month depending on age and experience (scales numbers 152-154).

Further details may be obtained from the chairman of the appointment committee, Professor H. L. W. Nelson, Instituut voor Klassieke Talen en Oude Geschiedenis, Drift 29, Utrecht (Netherlands).

Letters of application with curriculum vitae and a list of publications are to be sent to the same address, not later than 4 weeks after the date of publication of this advertisement.

Letters to recommend candidates for this post may also be sent to the chairman.

HET NEDERLANDSE MINISTERIE VAN BUITENLANDSE ZAKEN

vraagt tbv de Afdeling Vertalingen een

ENGELSTALIGE VERTALER

(mnl/vrl)

Taak: vertalen in het Engels van hoofdzakelijk Nederlandse teksten over een grote verscheidenheid van onderwerpen.

Vereist: Moedertaal Engels, universitaire of een hiermee vergelijkbare (nat) opleiding, een goed gevoel voor nuanceringen (zowel in de moedertaal als in het Nederlands), grondige kennis van Nederland, zijn volk, geschiedenis en maatschappelijke structuur. Een redelijke leesvaardigheid in het Frans of Duits is noodzakelijk.

Standplaats: Leidschendam.

Salaris: afhankelijk van leeftijd en ervaring max f3,985,- per maand.

Schriftelijke sollicitaties onder vermelding van vac nr 7-1022/2570 (in linkerbovenhoek van brief en enveloppe), zenden aan de Rijks Psychologische Dienst, Prins Mauritslaan 1 te 's-Gravenhage.

Bovengenoemd salaris is exclusief 8% vakantie-uitkering.

Technical Services Officer

SO1/2, £4524-£5277, (inclusive of London Weighting, plus £312 Salary Supplement.

Chartered Librarian required to maintain and develop computerization systems in the Sutton Libraries and ensure efficient organization of the ordering, acquisition and distribution of all media including classification and cataloguing.

Certain fringe benefits may be available including Lodging Allowance (up to 26 weeks) disturbance allowance, removal and legal expenses.

Application forms and further details obtainable from Roy Smith, FLA, Borough Librarian, Central Library, St Nicholas Way, Sutton, Surrey.

Telephone 01-643 4461.

Closing date 14 days after appearance of this advertisement.

Education (Libraries)

LONDON BOROUGH OF SUTTON

THE SOUTHERN EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD

invites applications for the following post:

AREA SECONDARY SCHOOLS LIBRARIAN

LIBRARY HEADQUARTERS, CRAIGAVON

Reference number 26/77

To be responsible to the Assistant Chief Librarian, Youth Services, for the service to Post-Primary Schools and Colleges of Further Education within the Board's area.

Applicants must be qualified librarians with five years' relevant library experience and an interest in education. A knowledge of children's literature would be an advantage.

Salary Scale: £3,825 to £4,095, plus Cost of Living Supplement of £312 per annum.

Application forms and further particulars are obtainable from the Personnel Officer, 3 Charlemont Place, The Mall, Armagh BT61 9AZ (telephone number Armagh 523811). Please quote job reference number when requesting application forms. Completed forms must be returned not later than 4 pm on Friday, May 20, 1977.

CANVASSING WILL DISQUALIFY.

GT. CORNARD UPPER SCHOOL

(13-18 co-educational)

SCHOOL LIBRARIAN

(Part-time)

A Qualified Librarian is required for half-time duty (arrangement of hours by negotiation).

Salary: Librarians Scale, pro rata to full-time rate of £2,607-£3,282 plus £312 supplement. Minimum for Chartered Librarian £2,922 plus £312 supplement. Commencing salary according to age and experience.

Further details and application form (returnable by 20 May, 1977) from the Headmaster, Gt. Cornard Upper School, Gt. Cornard, Sudbury CO10 0JU.

Suffolk County Council

LIBRARIANS

BBC required an Assistant (Records) in the Television Outside Broadcast Centre Videotape Section and Retention Unit, based in West London. The Unit is concerned with classifying and cataloguing news and other events recorded on videotape and providing an enquiry service to television producers wishing to use recorded material in their programmes. The post-holder works to a Senior Assistant (Records) is involved in classifying and cataloguing and will be expected to deal with enquiries and with basic operation and wire/retention descriptions. Applicants must have a professional library qualification (or substantial professional experience in a library) and a keen interest in and good knowledge of pop music. Salary £2,855 per annum (may be increased by negotiation occasionally by £169 to £3,851 per annum). Pay supplement: £312 per annum. Write or telephone immediately for application form (enclosing addressed foolscap envelope and quoting reference number 77.G.714 TLS) to Appointments Department, BBC, London W1A 1AA, telephone 01-580 4468, Ext. 4835.

CITY OF COVENTRY

LIBRARIES ARTS AND MUSEUMS

PRINCIPAL LIBRARIAN

CENTRAL MUSIC LIBRARY

Salary Scale AP5, £3,825 to £4,095 plus £312 per annum.

APPLICATIONS are invited from CHARTERED LIBRARIANS for the above post. The successful applicant will be responsible to the Principal Central Lending and Mobile Services, for the day to day control of the Central Music Library and will be a member of the Central Lending and mobile services management team.

The Central Music Library is based on an established record and cassette collection, and the person appointed will be requested to develop the section along subject specialist lines.

Application forms and further particulars from the Director, Libraries Arts and Museums, Jaguar Cars, Browns Lane, Coventry, CV4 2GO, returnable by May 16, 1977.

CHELSEA COLLEGE

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

APPLICATIONS are invited from professionally qualified persons for the post of

SENIOR LIBRARY ASSISTANT (Grade 5)

in the College Library. Duties will be concerned primarily with acquisitions and cataloguing. Previous experience in these fields is desirable. Commencing salary will be in the range £3,366 to £3,156 plus £312 London Allowance.

Applications, with the names of two referees, should be addressed to the Librarian, College Library, Manresa Road, London SW3 6LX, by May 16, 1977.

CAMBRIDGE INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

Applications are invited for the post of ASSISTANT in the Library. Relevant experience desirable. Salary on scale £2,327 - £2,853 (plus £312 supplement).

Please write for further details to the Librarian, Cambridge Institute of Education, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 2BX, to whom applications should be sent by the 31st May, 1977.

DEVON LIBRARY SERVICES

SENIOR ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

£3,320 to £3,282 (plus £312 per annum supplement)

CREDITON DIVISION

EAST DEVON AREA

APPLICATIONS for this post are invited from qualified/chartered librarians and those about to complete their professional exams.

The successful candidate will carry out a range of professional duties within the Division.

Further details and an application form are available (please enclose a stamped addressed envelope) from the County Librarian, Administration Centre, Barley House, Isleworth Road, Exeter.

Closing date for applications: May 20, 1977.

HARROW COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY AND ART

ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

There are two libraries on the campus, one serving the whole of the college, the other the School of Art. Opportunities will arise to work in both libraries and this post-holder will be required to develop an art specialism.

Applicants (Men or Women) must have completed A.L.A. examinations or have a post-graduate library qualification or equivalent and have a relevant art background.

Salary on Scale 1 (Jan. 1977) £2,607 to £3,282 (bar £2,928) according to qualifications and experience.

Application form from: Chief Administrative Officer, Harrow College of Technology and Art, Northwick Park, Harrow and Wealdstone, Middlesex HA3 5RA, and 24 hours, 01-863 5757, ext. 2.

Closing date: 23rd May, 1977.

PUBLIC & UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

CHAIR OF ENGLISH AND CHAIR OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

Applications are invited for the above-mentioned Chairs, both within the Faculty of Arts, in English Studies and Comparative Literature. The chair of English is vacant because of the retirement of the previous holder, Professor Dr. A. W. J. Green, on 30 June 1976. The successful candidate should have a strong academic background in English Specialist qualifications in the English language would be an advantage. The major responsibility of the post will be to strengthen and develop the English department's academic interest within the department.

Applicants for the Chair of Comparative Literature should have a strong academic qualifications in English literature and be able to teach two of the three European languages, Chinese, Japanese and Russian.

Further details and an application form are available (please enclose a stamped addressed envelope) from the Secretary, Central Appointments Board, Room 1, Administration Building, University of Hong Kong, Pokfulam Road, Hong Kong.

Closing date for applications is June 1977.

VACANT APPOINTMENTS

SOUTHERN ARTS

LITERARY FELLOWSHIP 1977-1979

Applications are invited from authors of published poetry, fiction or drama who are following in the southern arts region for a period of two years, beginning 1 July 1977, for a maximum of two years, at a rate of £4,000 per annum.

Further details may be obtained from the Literature Officer, Southern Arts, 19 Southgate Street, Winchester, Hampshire.

BOOKS & PRINTS

GRADUATE BOOKS

K free book finding service. We trace second-hand, out-of-print and rare antiquarian books and photos without obligation. Send your wants (or to Graduate Books, 1 Union Street, Dudley, West Midlands).

GUY'S HOSPITAL MEDICAL SCHOOL

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

APPOINTMENT OF LIBRARY ASSISTANT

APPLICATIONS are invited from GRADUATES, preferably in the biological sciences, for a post of LIBRARY ASSISTANT in the Medical School Library. Previous experience of most academic library routines plus involvement in mechanized information retrieval procedures.

Apply in writing, stating age and giving details of qualifications and experience (if any), to the Secretary, Guy's Hospital Medical School, London Bridge, SE1 9RT, quoting Ref. W.L.M.

LONDON, W.1

PRE-LIBRARY SCHOOL TRAINEE

Required for the library of the Royal College of Nursing. APPLICATIONS are invited from school leavers or graduates who intend to make a career in librarianship and who wish to gain library experience before entering Library School. Applications from candidates with library qualifications will not be considered since the college is not in a position to second the trainee to a library school. Attractive salary and good conditions.

Applications to the Personnel Officer, Royal College of Nursing, Henrietta Place, London W1M 0AB.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

EDUCATION

SCHOOL LIBRARIAN

A CHARTERED LIBRARIAN (male or female) is required as School Librarian at The Holgate School, Hucknall. The Comprehensive School opened in September 1975, combining a Secondary Grammar and two Secondary Modern Schools. Salary will be within the Aid scale £3,366 to £3,702 per annum plus £312 supplement.

Generous assistance will be given with the expenses incurred in moving house in accordance with the Authority's scheme.

For further details please write to the Assistant County Librarian, Education Library Service, County Library, Angel Row, Nottingham (tel. 582611).

Applications should reach the Headmaster, Mr. J. B. Archer, B.Sc., M.Ed., A.I.Biol., The Holgate School, Hillcrest Drive, Hucknall, Nottingham, not later than Friday 20th May, 1977.

WELSH NATIONAL WATER DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

The Welsh National Water Development Authority Library at Brecon has a vacancy for an Assistant Librarian on salary £3,300 to £3,867 plus £312 per annum supplement.

Candidates should be professionally educated in Librarianship.

Further particulars and application forms are available from The Assistant Personnel Officer (Ref. 13/Lib), Welsh National Water Development Authority, Cambrian Way, Brecon, Powys LD3 7HP.

Closing date: 23rd May, 1977.

DEVON LIBRARY SERVICES

CREDITON DIVISION

EAST DEVON AREA

APPLICATIONS for the post of Assistant Librarian in charge of the Crediton Branch Library are invited from qualified/chartered librarians and those about to complete their professional exams.

The successful candidate will be responsible for the post will be responsible for a wide range of duties within the Branch, including some room duties and enquiries, talks and exhibitions.

Applicants for the Chair of Comparative Literature should have a strong academic background in English literature and be able to teach two of the three European languages, Chinese, Japanese and Russian.

Further details and an application form are available (please enclose a stamped addressed envelope) from the Secretary, Central Appointments Board, Room 1, Administration Building, University of Hong Kong, Pokfulam Road, Hong Kong.

Closing date for applications is June 1977.

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY LIBRARY

WANSBECK AREA

ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

APPLICATIONS are invited from qualified/chartered librarians and those about to complete their professional exams.

The successful candidate will be responsible for the post will be responsible for a wide range of duties within the Branch, including some room duties and enquiries, talks and exhibitions.

Applicants for the Chair of Comparative Literature should have a strong academic background in English literature and be able to teach two of the three European languages, Chinese, Japanese and Russian.

Further details and an application form are available (please enclose a stamped addressed envelope) from the Secretary, Central Appointments Board, Room 1, Administration Building, University of Hong Kong, Pokfulam Road, Hong Kong.

Closing date for applications is June 1977.